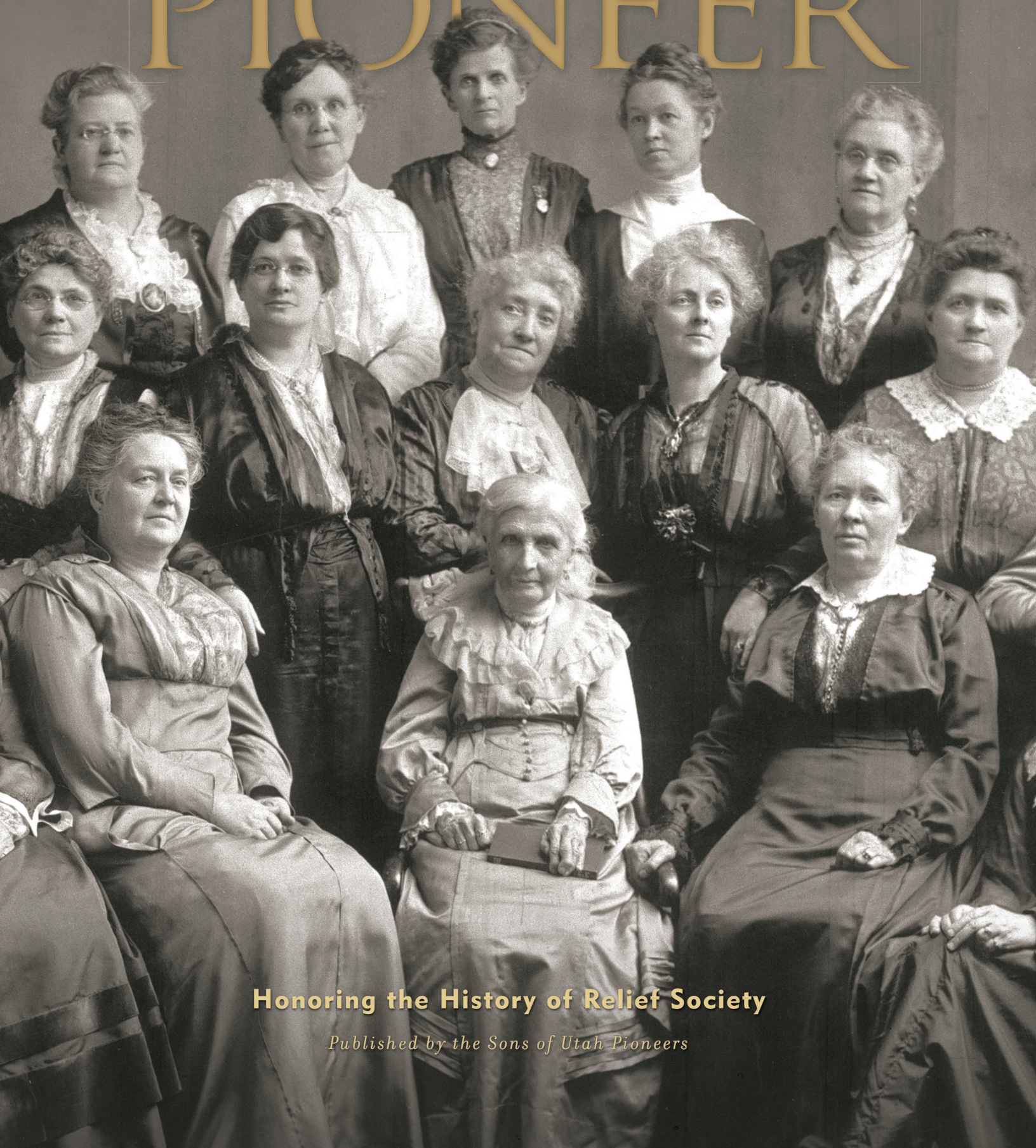


2011 ■ VOLUME 58 ■ NUMBER 4

# PIONEER



**Honoring the History of Relief Society**

*Published by the Sons of Utah Pioneers*



# PIONEER



## FEATURES

- 2 Preserving the Record and Memory of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, 1842–92  
*by Jill Mulvay Derr and Carol Cornwall Madsen*

- 8 Nauvoo Bell Tower & Relief Society Memorial, on Temple Square

- 10 The Forgotten Relief Societies, 1844–67  
*by Richard L. Jensen*

- 14 Relief Society Halls

- 18 Deseret Silk Association

- 22 Female Relief Society  
*by Eliza R. Snow*

- 24 Sarah Granger Kimball: Autobiography

- 27 Salt Lake 14th Ward Album Quilt, 1857  
*by Linda Hunter Adams*

- 28 First Four General Relief Society Presidents in Utah  
*by Kate B. Carter*

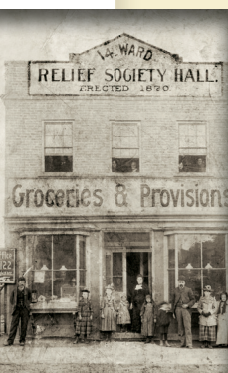
- 30 Minutes from the Female Relief Society of Provo 1868–69

## DEPARTMENTS

- 1 President's Message:  
*by L. La Mar Adams*

- 32 SUP National News

**Cover:**  
General Relief Society president Emmeline B. Wells with her counselors and general board members, ca. 1916.  
© Church History Library.



**Published by the Sons of Utah Pioneers**

*Pioneering yesterday, today, and tomorrow.*

## Contents

**PRESIDENT:** L. La Mar Adams

**PRESIDENT-ELECT:**  
Richard O. Christiansen

**PUBLISHER:** Kent V. Lott

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & MAGAZINE DESIGNER:**  
Susan Lofgren

**EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD:**  
Linda Hunter Adams  
Dr. F. Charles Graves  
Francis A. Madsen, Jr.

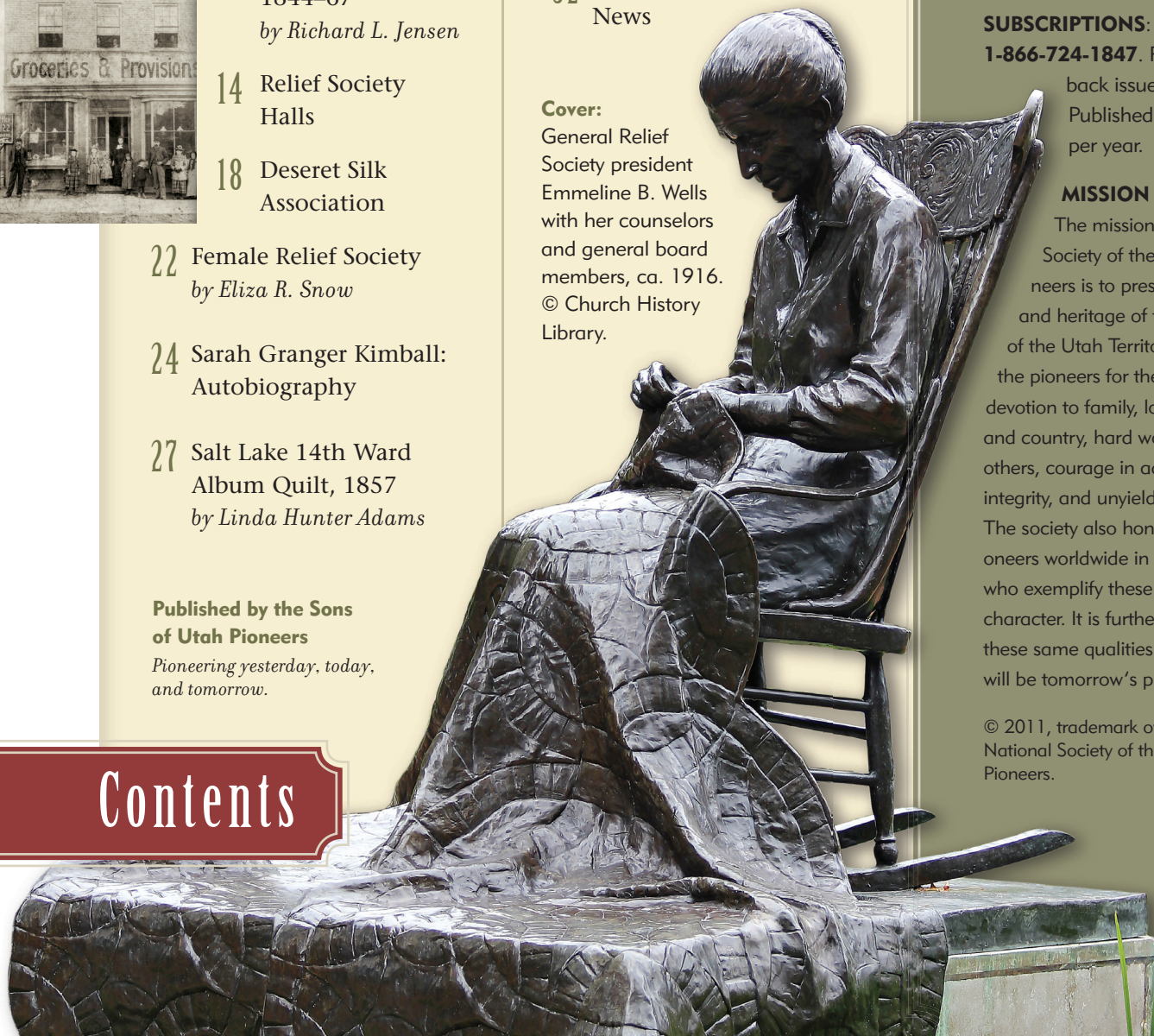
**WEBSITE:**  
[www.sonsofutahpioneers.org](http://www.sonsofutahpioneers.org)

**NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS:**  
3301 East 2920 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84109  
(801) 484-4441  
E-mail: SUP1847@comcast.net

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Call  
**1-866-724-1847.** For reprints and back issues, contact SUP. Published quarterly, \$15.00 per year.

**MISSION STATEMENT:**  
The mission of the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers is to preserve the memory and heritage of the early pioneers of the Utah Territory. We honor the pioneers for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work and service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination. The society also honors present-day pioneers worldwide in many walks of life who exemplify these same qualities of character. It is further intended to teach these same qualities to the youth, who will be tomorrow's pioneers.

© 2011, trademark owned by the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers.





# President's Message

BY L. LA MAR ADAMS



As we come to the conclusion of another year—a year of great accomplishments as

well as a year of great struggles and trials—we see it as pioneering, a pioneer wagon train seeking the Promised Valley. We inherited a financial crisis due to the baleful economy (instead of SUP operating off of endowment interests we were borrowing from the endowment itself for several years) plus a damaging flood from a malfunctioning water system, a leaking roof, and other major repairs ran us into debt more than we dare publish. But all these extreme trials brought several programs and committees to serve as oil to the squeaking wagon wheels. We now have four committees from which we can see the light at the end of the financial tunnel: fund-raising, docent, library-museum, and the continuing financial committee.

Yet, as the SUP wagon train rolls on, we have had a wonderful year of turning our hearts to our fathers by coming to know them through wonderful and inspiring SUP activities and services. These included great *Pioneer* magazine issues; inspirational and educational Regional Training seminars; a wonderful yearly SUP Symposium; outstanding monthly chapter meetings; increased Memorizations of pioneer ancestors; great efforts towards membership

recruitment; improved office efficiency; online registrations for symposiums and conventions; wonderful national and chapter treks; extensive monument developments; and the list goes on.

We are especially grateful for the women in our chapters. They continue to be the lifeblood of our organization and are a grand key to our pioneering to the Promised Valley in this life and eternity. We see from this issue of *Pioneer* that similarly to the holy priesthood being from eternity to eternity, the Relief Society has an ancient nature, “the same organization that existed in the primitive church” to help women to become a Kingdom of Priestesses. “And that same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there, only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy” (D&C 130:2).

The first time I heard a General Authority in conference indicate that women tend to be more spiritual than men, I struggled with the concept. But I have noticed that women tend to have deep sensitive feelings by which they often feel the Holy Ghost easier than men, since the Holy Ghost communicates by feelings, Spirit to spirit. They also seem to feel those from the other side of the veil more than men do. These eternal motherhood attributes help me to understand more fully how the Relief Society has great patriarchal priesthood meaning and fulfillment.

In an article about the Relief Society, Jill Mulvay Derr and Carol Cornwall Madsen observed that “a revelation to Joseph Smith identified ‘the mysteries of the kingdom’ as ‘the key to the knowledge of God,’ as manifest in the temple ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood (D&C 84:19–20). Thus, when the Prophet declared that Relief Society ‘sisters should move according to the ancient Priesthood,’ he invited them to prepare for the sacred ordinances to be administered in the temple. . . . Through the holy endowment, these women would come to understand ‘the mysteries of the kingdom.’ As they were sealed with their husbands in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, they could enter the patriarchal order of the Melchizedek Priesthood . . . a Kingdom of priestesses. We have that ceremony in our endowments as Joseph taught.”

May the Lord bless us to ponder the solemnities of eternity that we may keep all our covenants and obey in all things in fulfillment of the everlasting covenant by enduring to the end as well as our pioneer ancestors did. And in the meantime, may we study and use these pioneer histories and stories to become more acquainted with our ancestors so as to more fully turn our hearts to them, and theirs to us. ▼

*Images this issue courtesy Church History Library unless otherwise noted.*



# *Female Relief Society of Nauvoo*

1842-92

BY JILL MULVAY DERR,  
*senior research historian, LDS Church History  
Department*

CAROL CORNWALL MADSEN,  
*Joseph F. Smith Institute, BYU professor emeritus*

**T**hirty-eight years old when she was appointed secretary of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo in 1842, Eliza R. Snow kept the minutes of 19 of its 33 recorded meetings. Following the last society meeting in March 1844, she maintained possession of the record until her death in 1887.<sup>1</sup> Snow largely created the record: she preserved it; and she used it. She carried it and cited it when she addressed Relief Society women in Utah and shaped for thousands of women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the memory of Relief Society origins. (See article on Eliza R. Snow, p. 28 in this issue.)

Emmeline B. Wells was the last of the five general Relief Society presidents who had known the Prophet Joseph Smith. She capitalized on this experience and became thoroughly acquainted with his messages to the Relief Society. . . . Like Snow, she served first as the society's general secretary and later as its president. . . . She utilized the record to transmit the memory and meaning of Relief Society beginnings to a second generation of Mormon women. . . . (See article on Emmeline B. Wells, p. 29 in this issue.)

## **Eliza R. Snow and the Relief Society Record**

In 1868, more than 20 years after her arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, Snow took out the Relief Society Book of Records, studied it, and began to interpret portions of the text for Latter-day Saint women who had little or no knowledge of Relief Society. . . .<sup>2</sup>

*Bas-relief from Nauvoo  
Bell Tower Memorial.  
See p. 8 this issue.*



Snow played no part in the 1854–58 reorganization of ward Relief Societies in the Utah Territory.<sup>3</sup> Almost all of those promising organizations waned following the Utah War and Civil War; but Brigham Young initiated their revival on a Church-wide basis during the winter and spring of 1867–68. On Dec. 8, 1867, he publicly called upon bishops to reorganize Relief Societies in every ward to help care for the poor. Over the next four months, a dozen or so bishops inaugurated new or reconfigured old ward Relief Society organizations.<sup>4</sup> Then, pressing for more widespread action, Young called Eliza R. Snow to facilitate the new movement. She later recalled: “As I had been intimately associated with, and had officiated as Secretary for the first organization, Pres. Young commissioned me to assist the Bishops in organizing branches of the Society in their respective Wards; for at that time, the Bishops had not acquainted themselves with the movement, and did not know how to proceed.”<sup>5</sup> . . . April 1868 general conference . . . Young repeated his call for the organization of ward Relief Societies.<sup>6</sup>

On April 18, 1868, Eliza R. Snow published an article in the *Deseret News* providing women and bishops with basic information about the organization’s history, structure, and purposes.<sup>7</sup> (See pp. 22–23 in this issue.) In it, she laid out the essential ideas she would elaborate over the next two decades as she unceasingly traveled the Utah Territory to instruct women. First, she taught that an organization for women was a timeless part of “the true order



*Brigham Young*

of the church of Jesus Christ” and inseparably connected to priesthood pattern, order, and authority. Second, she communicated Joseph Smith’s charge to women not only to help the poor, but also to save souls, and emphasized his teachings on repentance, faithfulness, and charity. And finally, she conveyed his confidence in the glorious potential of Relief Society and its members.

The first two paragraphs of Snow’s article define an organization of substance, significance, and authority. Under the simple headline “Relief Society,” she wrote: “. . . We were told by our martyred prophet, that the same organization existed in the church anciently, allusions to which are made in some of the epistles recorded in the New Testament, making use of the title ‘elect lady’ [2 John 1].” . . . She essentially taught that Relief Society was part of “the same organization that existed in the primitive church.” It was a familiar theme that resonated with 19th-century Latter-day Saints.

In the second paragraph, she emphasized Relief Society’s connection to priesthood: “This is an organization that cannot exist without the Priesthood, from the fact that it derives all its authority and influence from that source.” . . . Snow thereby established the authority and legitimacy of women’s work. . . . As she visited local societies, often carrying with her the volume of Nauvoo minutes, Snow defined the officers’ role. “It is the duty of the President and her councilors to preside over the society



in the same manner, as the First Presidency preside over the Church," she told Provo women and their bishop in 1869, in words taken nearly verbatim from the minutes.<sup>8</sup>

The interrelatedness of Relief Society and priesthood committed women to work within the prescribed hierarchical order. . . . Nor were the women to burden the bishops, but rather to assist

them in caring for the poor. Snow expected women to take initiative and assert autonomy within Relief Society's proper sphere: "We need not be afraid of doing too much nor getting ahead of our Brethren and if we did why let them hurry up," she told women in Santaquin.<sup>9</sup> She taught Gunnison women the same principle, drawing precedent from the Nauvoo minutes: "The Prophet Joseph Smith said to the Sisters: 'provoke the Brethren to good works.'"<sup>10</sup> Snow described the Relief Society as "self-governing" and sought to cultivate in women a sense of initiative, responsibility, and partnership. "Woman was not only created as a help meet for man but to be one with him in the priesthood," she declared.<sup>11</sup> Echoing Joseph's counsel that "all must act in concert or nothing can be done," she affirmed that men's and women's interests "are both in the Kingdom of God and cannot be divided. The Gospel of Christ is designed to unite our labors."<sup>12</sup>

Just as Eliza Snow urged women to understand their connection to the timeless priesthood and church of Jesus Christ, she reminded them of their engagement in the essential and enduring work of salvation. In ward after ward, town after town, she repeated words Joseph had spoken to Nauvoo women gathered in the grove on June 9, 1842: "The Society is not only to relieve the poor but to save souls." . . . Every woman must repent and work out her own salvation, Snow taught, and then

# A Record of the Organization, and Proceedings of The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo.

Nauvoo Lodge Room  
March 17<sup>th</sup> 1842.

Present— President Joseph Smith, John Taylor,  
Willard Richards, Emma Smith and others.

Elder John Taylor was called to the chair by Pres.  
Smith, and Elder W. Richards appointed Secretary.

Meeting commenced by singing "The Spirit of God  
like a fire is burning" &c. — Prayer by Elder Taylor.

When it was moved by Pres. Smith and seconded  
by Mrs. Cleveland, that a vote be taken to know if all  
are satisfied with each female present, and are willing to  
acknowledge them in full fellowship, and admit them  
to the privileges of the Institution about to be formed.

The names of those present, were then taken as follows:

|                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Mrs. Emma Smith         | Bathsheba W. Smith     |
| Mrs. Sarah M. Cleveland | Phoebe M. Wheeler      |
| Phoebe Ann Hawley       | Elvira A. Cook         |
| Elizabeth Jones         | Margaret A. Cook       |
| Sophia Packard          | <del>Maria Smith</del> |
| Philinda Murdock        | Sarah M. Kimball       |
| Martha Knights          | Eliza B. Snow          |
| Dedmona Hulmes          | Sophia Robinson        |
| Elizabeth Ann Whitney   | Hannah Higgins         |
| Leonora Taylor          | Sophia B. Marks        |

Pres. Smith, & Elders Taylor and Richards



seek to become a “true Saint,” and a “savior on Mount Zion.” . . .<sup>13</sup>

Snow taught that Relief Society would strengthen women individually and provide opportunities for significant collective labor. “Joseph Smith said that the Relief Society was designed to perfect woman,” she affirmed in Fountain Green.<sup>14</sup> In Box Elder, she instructed: “The Prophet Joseph, in his lifetime, had said whenever the Church was fully organized there would always be a Relief Society, and every virtuous woman should be a member.”<sup>15</sup>

. . . “We are all frail and subject to weakness, and should be very merciful and forbearing towards one another, and as members of the Society should hold each others characters sacred.”<sup>16</sup> . . . “We want to get acquainted with each other exchange our views and ideas talk about common affairs of life and have our spirits refreshed. . . .”<sup>17</sup> Snow frequently offered instructions about assessing the needs of the poor and the sick, collecting donations, and administering aid with wisdom and sensitivity. “As its name indicates,” she wrote in 1868, “the first grand objective of the Society is to seek out, and relieve the wants of the poor.”<sup>18</sup> But she inevitably pointed to the need for spiritual as well as temporal aid. “Care of the poor was but a small part of our duties. The saving of souls was of far greater importance.”<sup>19</sup> The Relief Society was more than a benevolent or relief organization. Its essential work was more comprehensive: the work of salvation. Speaking to women Snow affirmed: “We are here in this dispensation to cooperate with God and our brethren in saving the human family.”<sup>20</sup> . . .

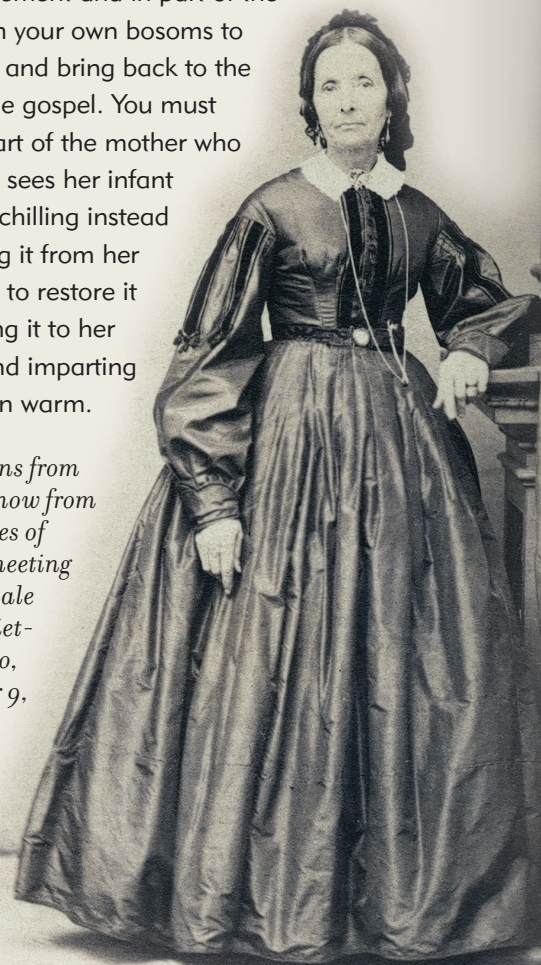
Beginning in 1868 and ending with her death in 1887, Eliza R. Snow effectively reestablished ward Relief Societies in the Mountain West. She praised Brigham Young for opening up the opportunity and even spoke of his call for revitalization as “turning the key.”<sup>21</sup> But the Nauvoo teachings of Joseph Smith were her authoritative precedents. . . . She . . . focus[ed] on the essential role of the women in the dispensation . . . the importance of women to the work of the kingdom, and enabled them to step forward and reclaim the vitality

— Eliza R. Snow

**A**lthough some consider [the calling of Visiting Teachers] of very little consequence. For my heart, I think there is no more important duty to perform. I do not feel myself fully competent to act in that calling yet were I called to it, I would not shrink but would humble myself before God and seek his Holy Spirit and do the best I could.

“The teachers business is not merely to beg in behalf of the poor but they are to act the part of saviors and they need enough of the Spirit of God that when they enter a house they may understand the spirit that prevails in it. I say to my Sisters that are called to be Teachers, when you visit as teachers seek to do all the good that lays in your power. If you find any that are cast down who have lost the spirit of God, speak words of encouragement and in part of the spirit from your own bosoms to enlighten and bring back to the light of the gospel. You must act the part of the mother who when she sees her infant cold and chilling instead of pushing it from her she seeks to restore it by clasping it to her bosom and imparting of her own warm.

*Instructions from Eliza R. Snow from the minutes of the 24th meeting of the Female Relief Societies of Provo, September 9, 1869.*





and spirit of the Relief Society. Then under its aegis they organized associations for young women and children, permanently establishing women's place within the Church organization.

### Emmeline B. Wells and the Relief Society Record

Although Emmeline B. Wells never attended the Nauvoo Relief Society, having arrived in the city as a teenager a month after its final meetings in 1844, she became as well versed as any original member in its procedure, objectives, and personal and social value. As a resident of Nauvoo for two years . . . , she developed a singular attachment to the original Society, perceiving the significance of preserving Joseph Smith's words to the Nauvoo Relief Society and disseminating them to all women in the Church. She met Joseph, heard him preach to the Church, and felt the resonance of those encounters throughout her life. His charismatic nature, his magnetic personality, and the power of

his words were integral elements in her testimony of his prophetic leadership. His sermons underlay her understanding of Relief Society's essential role in the organization of the church. Moreover, to Wells the Relief Society was an instrument to expand women's opportunities for personal growth and public contribution.<sup>22</sup>

In 1868, after the Relief Society was reestablished in Utah, Emmeline joined the Thirteenth Ward Society.<sup>23</sup> By then she was the mother of five daughters, two from her marriage to Newel K. Whitney, and three from her marriage to Daniel H. Wells, whom she married as a plural wife after Newel K. Whitney's death. Under Rachel Ridgeway Ivins Grant, first president of the Thirteenth Ward Relief Society, Emmeline served as assistant secretary and later as president of the quorum of visiting teachers.<sup>24</sup>

If Eliza R. Snow used the minutes to invest Mormon women with a sense of the spiritual power that Joseph opened to them through the restoration of the "ancient order," Emmeline Wells viewed them as an investiture of personal and temporal power that enabled women to move beyond the social restraints that limited their agency. The *Woman's Exponent*, which she began editing in 1872, was her primary forum, although she also verbalized her message of empowerment at Relief Society conferences and throughout her long career as a representative of Latter-day Saint women in national women's organizations.

At some point after 1872, Wells made "a verbatim copy" of the Nauvoo minutes.<sup>25</sup> The numerous brief marginal summaries of Joseph's words, paragraph by paragraph, and notations of the other talks and activities recorded in the minutes suggest that she made a thorough study of the record. As a result, the *Woman's Exponent* carried at least 50 articles specifically relating to the Nauvoo Relief Society, either extracts from the minutes, a review of its history, or reports of the various celebrations of its founding day, Mar. 17. More than those of any other meeting, however, Wells printed the minutes of the April 28 meeting. . . .<sup>26</sup> Joseph Smith's long sermon to the women based on 1 Cor. 12–13 discussed woman's exercise of spiritual gifts, the importance of each member to the



*Thirteenth Ward Relief Society Presidency. Front row, L to R: Margaret T. Mitchell (second counselor), Rachel Ivins Grant (president), Bathsheba B. Smith (first counselor). Back row: Emmeline B. Wells (assistant secretary), Elizabeth H. Godderd (secretary), and Mary W. Musser (treasurer).*



building up of the Church, and temple-related instructions along with promises of knowledge and intelligence that would alter their lives. . . . The last full reference to the Nauvoo minutes in the *Exponent* appeared in 1911, an article that summarized each of Joseph's six sermons to the Relief Society.<sup>27</sup> . . .

When President John Taylor set apart the first general Relief Society presidency in 1880, he invited his secretary to read from the Book of the Law of the Lord regarding the society's founding meeting when Taylor himself had been present.<sup>28</sup> . . . These uses of the Nauvoo minutes reinforced the close link between the Utah and Nauvoo societies, a goal both Snow and Wells wished to achieve. . . .

Joseph Smith's teachings also motivated Wells's life-long efforts to correct the false image of Mormon women held by a censorious public. Of particular importance to Wells, though seldom referenced by Eliza Snow, was Joseph's symbolic statement, given in the April 28 meeting: "I now turn the key to you in the name of God and this society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time."<sup>29</sup> For Emmeline, and for many others, this rhetorical gesture opened the way to secular as well as spiritual knowledge and opportunity. She associated women's political and legal advancement and the commencement of broader economic and educational opportunities directly with the organization of the Relief Society. As Emmeline explained, the organization of the Relief Society opened "one of the most important eras in the history of woman. It presented the great woman-question to the Latter-day Saints, previous to the woman's rights organizations."<sup>30</sup> When "the key of knowledge was turned" to women, she was convinced, "men no longer had

the same absolute sway." Women could now claim a place in those aspects of public life and personal development once closed to them, she optimistically asserted.<sup>31</sup> The Relief Society "has given to women in its rise and progress influence on all subjects that pertain to her welfare and happiness, and opportunities for developing her own thoughts, views and opinions,

all of which has had a tendency to render her intelligent in regard to matters which before were considered incompatible with 'a woman's sphere,' and unintelligible to her 'weaker' mind."<sup>32</sup>

In 1892, a jubilee celebration of the founding of the Relief Society in Nauvoo was held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle and in various wards throughout the Church. Dominant among the Tabernacle's decorations for that occasion was a floral depiction of the "key."<sup>33</sup> It is unlikely that anyone in the audience would have failed to understand the symbol's significance. It was an artistic reminder of Joseph Smith's rhetorical gesture in turning the key to the sisters at the April 28 meeting which still carried such strong reverberations. . . . As the last speaker of the day, Emmeline Wells summarized the significance of the early minutes and the unique features of the Relief Society. The *Exponent* reported her speech: "What does this woman's jubilee signify?" she asked. Then answered, "Not only that fifty years ago the organization was founded by a Prophet of God but that woman is becoming emancipated from error and superstition and darkness. . . . That light has come into the world and the Gospel has made her free—That the key of knowledge has been turned and she has drunk inspiration from the divine fountain."<sup>34</sup> . . .





To the women of the 19th century, . . . turning the key to women unlocked their potential and resulted in an “awakening” of women not only to the spiritual blessings that awaited them through the ordinances of the temple but also to their own capabilities in assuming an essential part in “the work of the world,” Wells believed. The Relief Society would be a major conduit leading toward achievement of women’s highest potential, both temporal and spiritual. This conviction provided the philosophical basis of Wells’s work in behalf of women, culminating in her own ascendancy to the general presidency of the Relief

Society in October 1910, the last link between the Nauvoo and the Utah general presidencies. ▣

1 “A Book of Records Containing the Proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo” (hereafter Nauvoo RS Minutes), Church History Library (CHL), Salt Lake City. Digital images in *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. DVD (Provo: BYU Press, [Dec. 2002], vol. 1, disc 19. All ward and stake records cited herein are in the CHL.

2 Substantially edited excerpts from Snow’s minutes, particularly Joseph Smith’s addresses to the Relief Society, appeared in the *Deseret News*, Aug. 22, Sept. 5, Oct. 3, and Dec. 19, 1855. The addresses for Mar. 17 and 30, April 28, May 26, June 9, and Aug. 31, 1842, are in

## Nauvoo Bell Tower & Relief Society Memorial, *on Temple Square*

“The Nauvoo Bell originally hung in the Temple that Church members built in Nauvoo, Illinois, in the 1840s. The Saints removed the bell in 1846 when they were forced to leave Illinois because of persecution. Following instructions from Brigham Young, the second company of pioneers carried the bell to the Salt Lake Valley. During their journey they rang the bell to signal daybreak and departure and to warn that night sentries were on duty.



Photo by Anna Lofgren

The bell is now rung hourly as a symbol of religious freedom and is heard on KSL radio. The monument honors the Relief Society . . . [and] was built with donations from Relief Society members to mark the organization’s centennial.

“Here in the shadow of the temple, on this spot hallowed by the tread of pioneer feet, the Relief Society-Women’s Benevolent Organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints erects this monument. It stands as an expression of appreciation for the wondrous opportunities for soul growth that have come to womenkind since the time one hundred years ago when in 1842 the Relief Society was organized in Nauvoo, Illinois, by the Prophet Joseph Smith, who said: ‘I now turn the key in your behalf in the name of the Lord and this society shall rejoice, and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time henceforth. . . . Let kindness charity and love crown your works.’

“It is with gratitude that this monument is dedicated to the thousands of unsung Relief Society heroines who over a period of one hundred years have stimulated intellectual development and given compassionate service without thought of honor or reward. These valiant women have nourished the hungry, clothed the needy, nursed the sick, buoyed up the discouraged and disconsolate, and tenderly prepared the dead for burial.” *Inscription on bas-reliefs by Avard Fairbanks, prominent Utah sculptor.* ▣



Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 104–5, 110, 114–19, 120–21, 122–24, 129–31. See also Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 74–75.

3 In 1854, some LDS women organized “Indian Relief Societies” to sew clothing for impoverished Indian women and children. At Brigham Young’s direction, they were reconfigured as ward organizations and placed under bishops’ supervision. See Richard L. Jensen, “Forgotten Relief Societies,” pp. 10 in this issue of *Pioneer*; Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 75–82.

4 Presiding Bishopric, Bishops’ Meeting Minutes, 1851–84, Dec. 5, 1867, CHL. Under the auspices of their ward Female Relief Societies, women would both meet together regularly to discuss spiritual and temporal concerns and work collectively in conjunction with their bishops to relieve the poor.

5 Eliza R. Snow Smith, “Sketch of My Life,” holograph, Bancroft Library, Univ. of California, Berkeley, in *The Personal Writing of Eliza R. Snow*, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: U of U Press, 1995), 35–36.

6 “Remarks by President Brigham Young, in the New Tabernacle, afternoon, April 8, 1868,” *Deseret News Weekly*, May 13, 1868, 2–3; see also *Journal of Discourses* 12:202–5.

7 Eliza R. Snow, “Relief Society,” *Deseret Evening News*, April 18, 1868, 2; April 20, 1868, 2.

8 Provo Second Ward, Utah Stake, RS Minutes, 1869–82, Sept. 1869.

9 Santaquin/Summit Creek, Utah Stake, RS Minutes, 1878–89, June 30, 1878.

10 Gunnison Ward RS Minutes, 1879–87, Aug. 13, 1880.

11 “R.S.Y.L. M.I.A. and Primary Reports,” [“Special meeting of the Kanosh Relief Society (Willard County) Nov. 12th, 1880”], *Woman’s Exponent* 9 (Dec. 1, 1880): 103; Lehi Ward, Utah Stake, RS Minutes, 1878–82, Oct. 27, 1880.

12 Nauvoo RS Minutes, Mar. 30, 1842; “Special meeting of the Kanosh Relief Society,” 103.

13 Nauvoo RS Minutes, June 9, 1842.

14 “Fountain Green, July 8th, 1878,” *Woman’s Exponent* 7 (Aug. 1, 1878): 39.

15 Box Elder Stake, RS Minutes 1875–84, Oct. 10, 1876. See also Nauvoo RS Minutes, Mar. 30, 1842.

16 Eliza R. Snow, Letter to Sister [Angeline] Holden. Joseph Smith instructed the sisters to “hold all characters sacred.” Nauvoo RS Minutes, Mar. 17, 1842.

17 Davis Stake RS Minutes, 1878–87, July 27, 1883.

18 Snow, “Relief Society,” 2.

19 Morgan Stake, RS Minutes, 1878–1912, Oct. 24, 1879.

20 Provo Second Ward, Sept. 1869.

21 Snow wrote: “President Young has turned the key to a wide and extensive sphere of action and usefulness. Eliza R. Snow, “Relief Society [concluded],” *Deseret Evening News*, April 20, 1868, 2.

22 Carol Cornwall Madsen, *An Advocate for Women: The Public Life of Emmeline B. Wells* (Provo: BYU Press/Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006).

23 Emmeline had been a member of the first Thirteenth Ward Relief Society organized in 1854 but disbanded during the Utah War in 1857. Jensen, “Forgotten Relief Societies, 1844–67,” 112–13. (See pp. 22 and 23 in this issue.)

24 In the early Utah years, many ward Relief Societies called members for a specified time to be visiting teachers. They were organized into quorums with their own presidencies who served under the ward Relief Society presidency and often held their own meetings. Their assignment was to ascertain and relieve the needs of the poor, as in Nauvoo. Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 91–92.

25 Holograph copy in Emmeline Wells Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU.

26 See, for example, “Sermons and Writings of the Prophet Joseph, His Teachings to the Relief Society,” *Woman’s Exponent* 17 (Aug. 15, 1884): 44, 52, and “The Relief Society: Extracts from the Records,” *Woman’s Exponent* 34 (Nov. 1905): 36–38.

27 “The Relief Society (copied from the Original Record), Eliza R. Snow, Secretary,” *Woman’s Exponent* 39 (Feb. 1911): 49.

28 “Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Conference,” *Woman’s Exponent* 9 (July 1, 1880), 21–22.

29 Nauvoo RS Minutes, April 28, 1842.

30 The first woman’s rights convention was held in 1848, six years after the Relief Society’s founding. Homespun [Susa Young Gates], “What Hath the Century Wrought,” *Woman’s Exponent* 29 (Jan. 1, 1901): 71, noted: “From the hour the key was given, great and restless activity has marked every phase of womanly life.” Her article follows a collection of short essays by women, “Symposium,” which Gates may have assembled and concluded with her own piece.

31 “A Wonderful Age,” *Woman’s Exponent* 27 (Feb. 1, 1899): 100.

32 “Women’s Organizations,” *Woman’s Exponent* 8 (Jan. 15, 1880): 122.

33 Large portraits of the three general Relief Society presidents, along with a portrait of Joseph Smith, were also displayed. Emmeline B. Wells, Diary, Mar. 15, 1892, Perry Special Collections, BYU.



*The*  
**Forgotten  
Relief  
Societies**  
*1844-67*

*Relief Society Hall,  
Beaver, Utah*



BY RICHARD L. JENSEN,  
*Joseph Smith Papers Project*

Nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint women showed a remarkable propensity for organizing. To engage in benevolent service, to share useful information, to fill social and spiritual needs, they met together in the humid summers of Nauvoo, Illinois, and in the blustery winters of Cardston, Canada. Mormon Relief Societies emerged in struggling branches in Europe and in new-founded settlements in Arizona and Wyoming. But between the vigorous movement in Nauvoo and the equally vital organizational efforts which began in the late 1860s fell a 23-year gap.

The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo received its initial impulse in 1842 from a seamstress's proposal to sew shirts for the men working on the Nauvoo Temple. In response, Sarah Kimball and her neighbors organized the effort, which the Prophet Joseph Smith soon sanctioned and amplified, declaring organization for women to be an essential feature of the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Evidence that the Nauvoo Relief Society filled more needs than covering a few backs was the involvement of approximately 1,300 women in its activities.<sup>1</sup> But the original Relief Society was disbanded in early 1844 in the midst of conflicts in south-

western Illinois which threatened to tear the Church apart, conflicts which led to the eventual murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. . . .

In late 1867 Brigham Young instructed Latter-day Saint bishops to organize Relief Societies in their wards and authorized Eliza R. Snow, secretary of the original Relief Society, to assist. Less than two years later, Latter-day Saint women had created an impressive, far-flung organization which has persisted to the present time. Still, the gap between Nauvoo and the permanent "restoration" of the Relief Society is puzzling. . . .

The gap is more apparent than real. Actually, there was a profusion of women's meetings at Winter Quarters in the spring of 1847 and again in the Salt Lake Valley from the fall of 1847 to the first months of 1848. Small groups of women met in private homes, where they encouraged and blessed each other, often exercising such spiritual gifts as speaking in tongues. "Had a rejoicing time thro' the outpouring of the spirit of God" was a typical comment in Eliza R. Snow's journal in April 1847. "All hearts comforted."<sup>2</sup> Although there was no formal organization, procedures were well defined, and different women presided at various meetings. Eliza Snow and Patty Sessions were prime movers in initiating these meetings. Thus, sagging spirits were bolstered and deep feelings of sisterhood, begun in Nauvoo, took root.

These unofficial "female meetings" tapered off drastically by the spring of 1848, several months after most of the women made the trek across the plains to Utah. Women's meetings were then held only occasionally for several years. . . .

The first formally constituted women's organization in Utah

**T**here was a profusion of women's meetings at Winter Quarters in the spring of 1847 and again in the Salt Lake Valley from the fall of 1847 to the first months of 1848.





for which records exist was the Female Council of Health, begun in Salt Lake City in 1851. Its initial nucleus was a group of midwives who had been meeting weekly at the home of Phoebe Angell, the mother of Brigham Young's wife Mary Ann. They were members of the Council of Health, a local body founded in 1849 which was open to both men and women. Realizing that some women were reluctant to discuss medical matters in the presence of men and thus did not wish to join the Council of Health, the parent council organized the auxiliary female council and expanded it to include any woman interested in health care. Phoebe Angell was appointed its president and treasurer Sept. 17, 1851, with Patty Sessions and Susannah Lippincott Richards as counselors. Members of the Female Council heard lectures by local physicians, discussed the use of faith and herbs in healing, attempted to design more healthful female fashions, spoke and sang in tongues, and enjoyed a social and spiritual interchange. They generally met twice a month. . . . The fact that they occasionally met at Salt Lake's old tabernacle would seem to indicate that a considerable number of people was sometimes involved. In November 1852

the Female Council of Health appointed

representatives to all but two of the 19 wards in Salt Lake City to provide for the health needs of the poor. After the death of Phoebe Angell in November 1854, Patty Sessions was appointed to succeed her as president.<sup>3</sup>

Other needs soon arose which were outside the specific concerns of the Female Council of Health, and women responded with another organization. This time Brigham Young and other male Church leaders evidently helped provide the initial inspiration, but not the specific authorization, for the women's new organization. In the fall of 1853 Utah was limping toward the close of the Walker War, a series of sporadic conflicts with the Ute Indians. President Young began to outline with fervent intensity his vision of the mission which the Latter-day Saints should undertake among the Indian people. Latter-day Saints interpreted the Book of Mormon to find that Indians were descendants of the House of Israel who had been partakers of true religion and an advanced civilization, but had fallen to a degraded state. They were to be

redeemed from degeneracy by the "gentiles," including particularly the Latter-day Saints.<sup>4</sup> Now, in this land of Utes,

Paiutes, and Shoshoni, Latter-day Saint colonizers were confronted with the frustrating necessity of coexisting with people whom they were supposed to help but who often resented the Mormon presence and came into conflict with them.

. . . [President Young] . . . urged





Church leaders in early October 1853: "The time has come. If you will find a man to preside [in Salt Lake City] I will go. I say turn to the House of Israel now."<sup>5</sup> Two days later he issued a call in general conference to two dozen individuals to serve as missionaries among the Indians in the Great Basin. The Saints, he declared, had been driven from Nauvoo to the West so that they might preach the gospel to the Indians. The missionaries' first concern should be "to civilize them, teach them to work, and improve their condition by your utmost faith and diligence."<sup>6</sup> . . .

The Indian missionaries were expected to depart in the spring of 1854, when conditions were more favorable for travel. In the meantime, . . . several women of Salt Lake City, including Matilda Dudley, Mary Hawkins, Amanda Smith, and Mary Bird, met Jan. 24, 1854, and decided to organize "a society of females for the purpose of making clothing for Indian women and children."<sup>7</sup> Two weeks later, Feb. 9, 1854, . . . they formally organized. Matilda [Dudley] was elected president and treasurer; Mary Hawkins and Mary Bird, counselors; Louisa R. Taylor, secretary; and Amanda Smith, assistant secretary. Twelve other charter members were listed. They adopted four resolutions: Each new member should pay 25 cents; meetings were to be opened and closed with prayer; the society was to meet at 9:00 A.M. and close at 4:00 P.M.; and their first effort would be to make a rag carpet, sell it, and use the proceeds to purchase materials to make clothing for Indian women and children.<sup>8</sup> . . .



*Patty Sessions*

With the coming of the spring thaw, 1854, Brigham Young sent the Indian missionaries to the vicinity of John D. Lee's small settlement at Fort Harmony, Iron County. Then, almost on their heels, he set out himself with a large traveling party to

visit settlements south of the Salt Lake Valley, hoping to establish peace with the Utes. His visit with Chief Wakara at Chicken Creek, Juab County, was "eminently successful," as he expressed it.<sup>9</sup> Wakara and two other chiefs accompanied him for much of the remaining trip, having assured the Mormon leader that even men traveling alone to California need not fear violence from these Native Americans.

Peace with Wakara and establishment of the Southern Indian Mission signaled the beginning of the Mormons' most ambitious attempts to establish positive relationships with the Indians. By now Brigham Young recognized that enormous cultural differences posed formidable challenges. Still, he expected his people to aid the Indians in a substantial way and, in so doing, to strengthen their own position in the Great Basin. The Indians' precarious living conditions would improve as they learned skills in homemaking and health care, in raising cattle and growing wheat. [It was hoped] many of them would eventually be converted to true religion as a part of their Mormon-sponsored redemption. . . .

The women of Parowan were to play a major role in carrying out President Young's instructions. An 1855 report of assignments gives a glimpse of skills and spiritual gifts crucial in everyday pioneer life which the women shared with their

**F**eb. 9, 1854, they formally organized a society of females for the purpose of making clothing for Indian women and children.





Indian neighbors: “Tom Whitney, an Indian, was set apart as chief of these Pai-edes [Paiutes], and Aunt Mary Smith, sisters Meeks, West, and Fish were set apart as nurses and teachers to the females, to teach them their organization, the taking care of children, &c, and to nurse according to revelation, that is, by laying on hands, anointing and with mild herbs.”<sup>10</sup>

Young’s southernmost stop was at Fort Harmony, where he reiterated to the Indian missionaries that their immediate purpose was to feed, clothe, and teach the Indians, and learn to speak with them in their own language.<sup>11</sup>

While the missionaries could help the Indians learn to farm more efficiently and provide them with some food where necessary, there was little they could do to clothe them. On the sound insight that a cultural transformation must include

clothing (not to mention the necessity of providing protection against the elements), the missionaries appealed to readers of the *Deseret News* to donate used clothing, “especially shirts, to help cover the nakedness of the Indians, especially the women.”<sup>12</sup>

Brigham Young went further. He announced to the people of Parowan: “We are going to propose to the sisters when we get home to make clothes, &c for the Indians & I give you the privilege to make clothing for those little children & the women, but the men I dont care so much about.”<sup>13</sup> . . . The Mormons would help clothe the Indians—specifically, those in Southern Utah. With this goal in mind, President Young, apparently unaware that an Indian Relief Society was already functioning in Salt Lake City, had a surprise awaiting him when he returned home. . . .

## Relief Society Halls

**F**ollowing the Saint’s arrival in Utah, the pioneer period between 1847 and 1869 saw a proliferation in building types within the Church. . . .

A number of specialized buildings appeared during this period. One was Relief Society halls, which were built for the women’s auxiliary of the Church. They were commonly associated with the upper floor of a coop-store and used by the sisters for the improvement of themselves and those within the Church. Other types were tithing offices, which were used as collecting points for monetary and in-kind donations for the Saints. Relief Society halls and tithing offices were used into the early part of the twentieth century. . . .

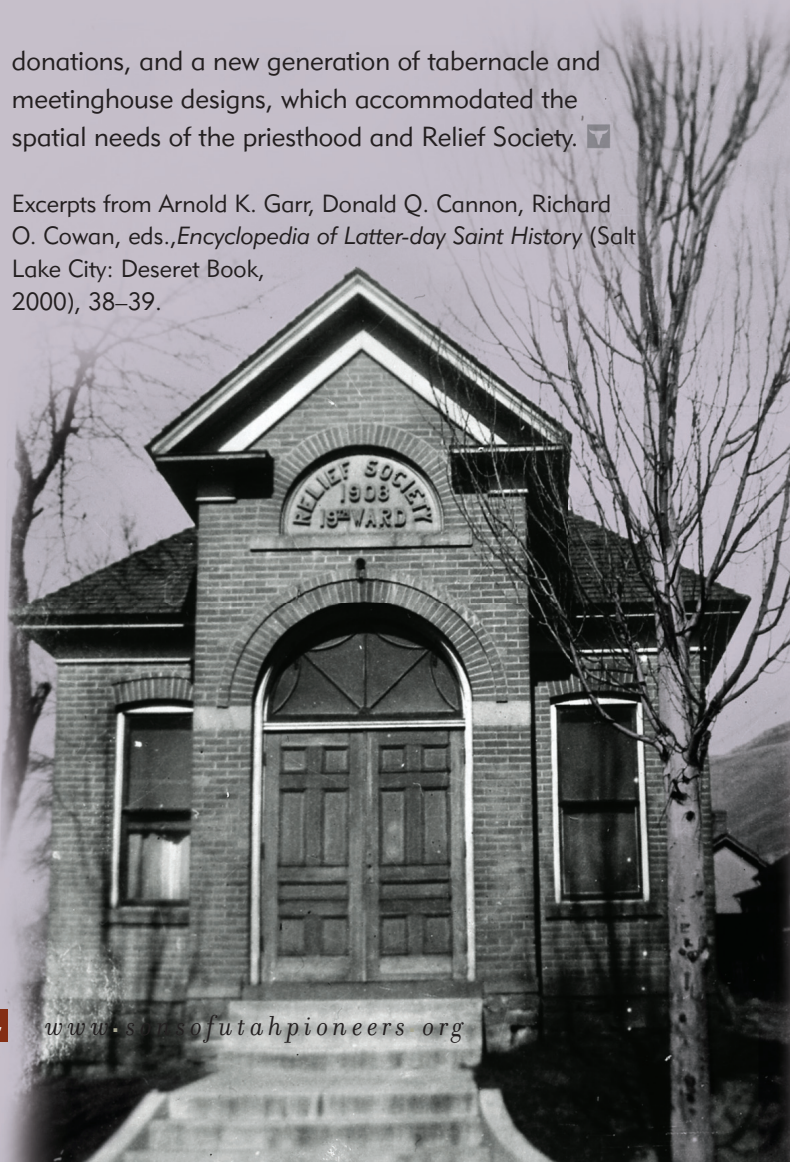
The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 marked the end of the pioneer period and beginning of a new era in Church architecture. The period between 1869 and 1890 saw an increase in building to satisfy the growing population of the Church. . . .

[During] the period between 1890 and 1920 . . . Relief Society halls and tithing offices were abandoned because of societal changes, a shift toward monetary

donations, and a new generation of tabernacle and meetinghouse designs, which accommodated the spatial needs of the priesthood and Relief Society. ▣

Excerpts from Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, Richard O. Cowan, eds., *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 38–39.

*Below: 19TH Ward Relief Society Hall, still stands at 168 West 500 North in Salt Lake City. The hall was built in 1908, originally on a different site.*





**Thirteenth Ward covenant:**  
*"speak no evil of each other nor of the authorities of the Church but endeavor by means in our power to cultivate a spirit of union humanity and love and that this shall be the covenant into which all shall enter who become members of this society."*

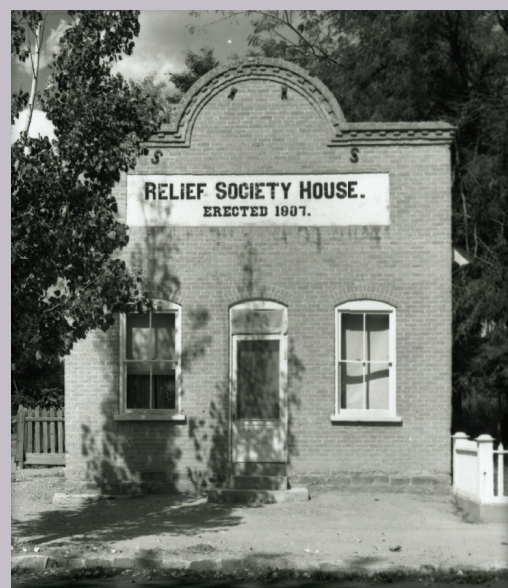
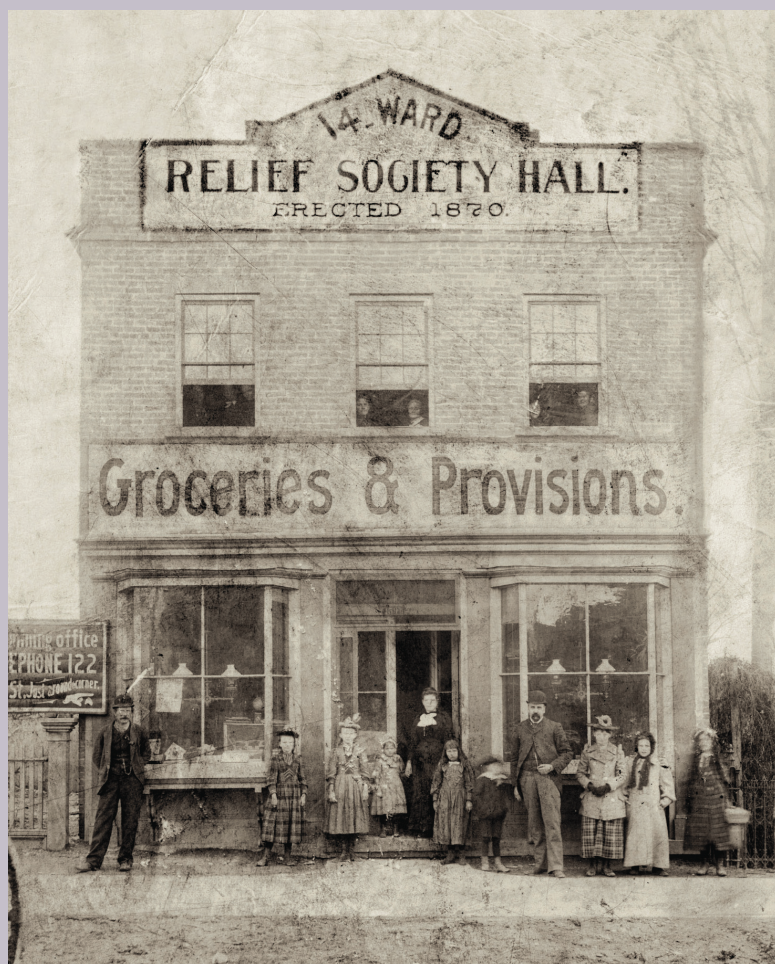
"I propose to the Sisters in this congregation to form themselves into societies to relieve the poor brethren and sustain them. We need not have a poor family. I propose to the women to clothe the Lamanite children and women and cover their nakedness. All the Lamanites will be numbered within this Kingdom in a very few years and they would be as zealous as any other. The sisters should meet in their own wards and it will do them good."<sup>14</sup> Once again, as in Nauvoo, ecclesiastical leaders had capitalized on a fledgling women's organization which had been initiated independently to achieve specific goals and sanctioned its expansion to meet official ends. . . .

Matilda Dudley chaired a meeting organizing a separate society for the Salt Lake Thirteenth Ward. She was elected president and treasurer; Augusta Cobb, first counselor; Sarah A. Cook, second

counselor; and Martha Jane Coray, secretary. Appropriately, these meetings were held in the home of William and Rebecca Hennefer: William was one of the Southern Indian missionaries.<sup>15</sup>

The initial concern of the local societies, quickly organized in Salt Lake Valley, focused on the Indians, although Brigham Young's injunction to the women also called for aid to the poor among themselves. After some debate, the Thirteenth Ward organization adopted the name "Female Indian Relief Society." . . .<sup>16</sup>

At least 22 Indian Relief Societies were organized in 1854,

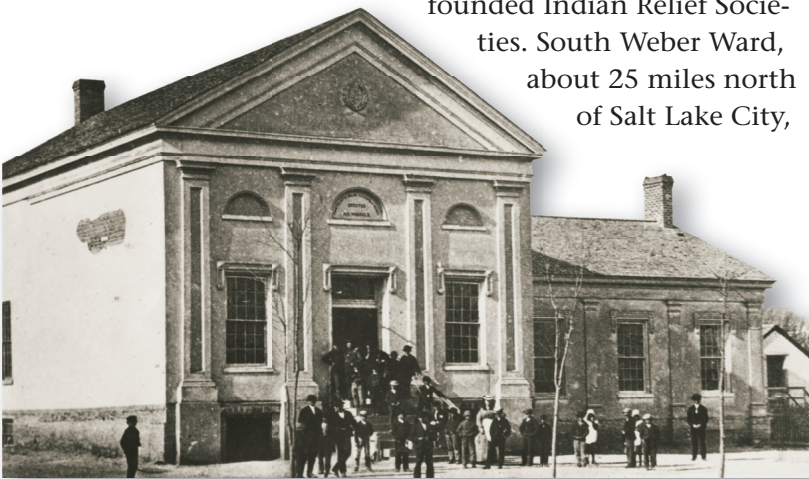


Above: Relief Society Hall in Santa Clara, Utah. Left: 14TH Ward Relief Society Hall (ca. 1870), located at 159 West 1ST South. The upper floor served as the meeting hall and the store was on the main floor.



primarily in Salt Lake City. There was no systematic effort to encourage organization outside the city; however, a smattering of other wards also

founded Indian Relief Societies. South Weber Ward, about 25 miles north of Salt Lake City,



*Above: 13TH Ward building located 139 East 200 South, courtesy Utah State Historical Society.*

responded favorably when Phoebe Woodruff visited in June with her husband, Wilford, and encouraged the women there to organize. Other outlying settlements involved in the clothing drive—presumably through organized Relief Societies—were Big Cottonwood (Holladay), South Cottonwood (east of present-day Murray and west of Holladay), West Jordan, and Mill Creek. Interestingly, Brigham Young's own Eighteenth Ward was one of only three in the city which failed to organize. His wives Mary Ann Angell Young and Augusta Cobb Young and his daughter-in-law Mary Ann Ayres Young were all active in the Thirteenth Ward's society.<sup>17</sup> . . .

The Indian Relief Societies met biweekly, weekly, or occasionally oftener when the women were eager to complete Indian clothing for a shipment south. The societies seemed somewhat ad hoc, working diligently on a short-term project of some urgency, yet reflecting concerns beyond simple relief programs. Soberly, the Thirteenth Ward women entered into a covenant: "That we speak no evil of each other nor of the authorities of the Church but endeavor by means in our power to cultivate a spirit of union humanity and love and that this shall be the covenant into which all shall enter who become members of this society." . . . One of the first activities for the Relief Societies was soliciting donations. The Thirteenth Ward

approached this task systematically, assigning pairs of women to visit specific blocks within the ward territory and request contributions. They accepted cash, yardage, sundry sewing items, carpet rags, and various items which could be converted into cash. Occasionally, a used article of clothing was donated. The Society sponsored a party in the Social Hall and the proceeds were used for Indian clothing.<sup>18</sup>

Having received donations, the women proceeded with the first phases of production. The Twelfth Ward bought one and one-half bolts of sheeting and began to sew clothing from that material. They also bought cotton, dyed it, wove it into 33 yards of plaid, then proceeded to make clothing items from it. Other materials used included linsey, homespun gingham, "Jeans," hickory, calico, linen, "factory," and "drilling."

Dresses were the most numerous items sewed. Also common were slips, chemises, sacks (short, loose-fitting coats), and shirts, with an occasional apron, pair of stockings, or handkerchief. One sister donated a used purple woollen petticoat. Indian Relief Societies also made several quilts and, occasionally, blankets.

Individual ward Indian Relief Societies delivered the Indian clothing they had produced to Brigham Young, presumably by taking it to the General Tithing Office on the corner of South Temple and Main in downtown Salt Lake City, where clerks recorded in detail what was received. Brigham Young's 12-year-old daughter Luna, daughter of Mary Ann Angell Young, thus delivered one lot of children's clothing from the Thirteenth Ward. . . .

Each Relief Society was credited separately on Brigham Young's financial records for all items brought in. The bulk of Indian clothing was produced in a four-month period, from June to September 1854, although several items came in as late as December. . . . In all, Indian Relief Societies contributed Indian clothing and bedding valued at \$1,540 and cash totaling \$44. In addition, 78 yards of rag carpet valued at \$90.50 were credited to the Twelfth and Fourteenth Ward Indian Relief Societies and were purchased by Brigham Young's household, probably for use in the newly completed



Lion House. The proceeds may have been used to purchase materials for Indian clothing.<sup>19</sup>

The average Indian Relief Society produced \$70's worth of Indian goods representing about 50 items of clothing and bedding. At the same time, the five most productive wards contributed an average of \$182 in goods, amounting to about 90 items from each ward. In all, the Indian Relief Societies contributed nearly 900 items of clothing, most of which were sewn specifically for the Indians by the women themselves.<sup>20</sup> . . .

Between August and October, Brigham Young shipped Indian goods valued at \$1,880 to Cedar City for distribution to the Indians by Iron County settlers, and to Harmony for the Indian missionaries to distribute. This included some items purchased from or contributed by Salt Lake City merchants, as well as Relief Society donations. . . .<sup>21</sup>

With the expansion of the Southern Indian Mission southwest to Santa Clara, new opportunities arose through the willingness of Tutsagavits and other Paiutes to cooperate with the missionaries, to help them build homes, and to learn the arts of settled agriculture. By May 1855 Jacob Hamblin had distributed nearly \$50 in Indian goods at Santa Clara. Others who bought clothing for Indians that spring included John D. Lee, Charles W. Dalton, and Robert Ritchie of Harmony. Items were generally sold for one-third to three-fifths of the original list price. Distribution at Harmony and Santa Clara continued at least as late as October 1855.<sup>22</sup>

By May 1856, . . . the supply was apparently drawn upon for the purchasing of Indian children from the Utes and for trading for skins. Indian missionaries and settlers occasionally purchased Paiute children from the Utes, preferring to bring them up in Latter-day Saint homes rather than see them abused or taken to Mexico for sale as slaves.<sup>23</sup> . . .

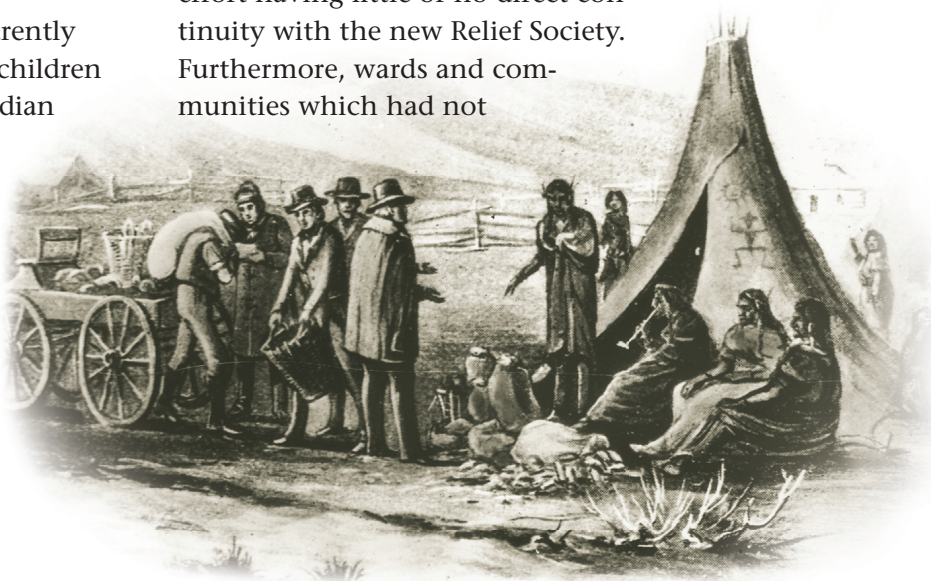
What effect the Indian Relief Society movement had on the Indians of Southern Utah is impossible to assess with any confidence. As a tangible sign of Mormon goodwill, providing clothing and bedding in return for labor

or commodities helped alleviate antagonism and promote friendly relations. . . .<sup>24</sup>

By December 1854 the associations had produced an ample surplus of clothing for Southern Utah's Indians. Yet some of the women were reluctant to disband "their" organization. As sewing for the Indians tapered off, women began quilting and making rag rugs for local poor. Soon Brigham Young and the ward bishops, recognizing the potential in the women's organizations, found other projects for them. In early December 1854, Brigham Young requested the wards of Salt Lake City to provide rag carpeting for the floor of the old Salt Lake Tabernacle. Each ward was to furnish specified lengths and widths for a total of 771 square yards. For an organization like the Sixteenth Ward's Relief Society, or "Benevolent Society," the carpeting assignment posed little challenge. They completed half of their carpet by mid-December and soon were ready for other assignments.<sup>25</sup>

Next came a transition to more permanent concerns. In January 1855 Brigham Young notified bishops that he wanted the women to concentrate on aiding the Latter-day Saint poor. . . . The transition came in a variety of ways. . . . Perhaps some wards saw the Indian Relief Society as a one-time effort having little or no direct continuity with the new Relief Society. Furthermore, wards and communities which had not

*In all, the Indian Relief Societies contributed nearly 900 items of clothing, most of which were sewn specifically for the Indians by the women themselves.*





produced goods for Indians now created Relief Societies, too. Brigham Young's announced intention was that Relief Societies be organized in all Mormon wards or communities.<sup>26</sup> By 1858, Relief Societies functioned in Cedar City, Manti, Provo, Spanish Fork, and Willard, as well as in Salt Lake Valley. Clearly, the pattern became widespread, although few contemporary records have survived to fully document the movement.<sup>27</sup>

The need for Relief Society aid to the poor was soon far greater than anyone could have anticipated. In early 1855, the Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake Valley were relatively prosperous and comfortable; but during the summer, grasshopper infestation and drought decimated the year's

harvest, and a severe winter followed. A second grasshopper infestation made the harvest of 1856 no better.<sup>28</sup> With the entire Utah Mormon community on the verge of starvation, Relief Societies had ample opportunity to serve. They took up collections for food, clothing, and money and produced various useful items, especially quilts and rag carpets, which could be provided for the poor, or sold or exchanged for necessary commodities.

Special needs arose so frequently that they became a regular facet of the societies' activity. Lucy Meserve Smith, president of the Relief Society for the city of Provo, told of providing clothing and bedding for the destitute survivors of handcart treks in late 1856:

**W**hen the **Deseret Silk Association** was officially organized 15 June 1875, Zina [D. H. Young] became the first president. . . . Her mission required traveling throughout the Territory, from Logan to St. George, "preaching up silk." . . .

The Relief Society officially advocated silk production, and its leaders addressed this topic in many of its meetings. . . . A message from Zina Young published in the *Woman's Exponent* stated: "Every branch of the Relief Society throughout the length and breadth of this territory . . . is called upon to lay hold of this subject of home industry with a will and to take active part in the great work of bringing about the perfect organization of a self-sustaining people. . . .

Nearly every local Relief Society sponsored silk projects. These were directed by the ward Relief Society presidents, who also served as agents to solicit donations and as liaisons between local growers and the Deseret Silk Association. . . . Each ward Relief Society was asked to send one sister to Salt Lake City to be trained in

the art of silk production. These sisters then returned to their own communities to educate others. . . .

Utah silk was exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1892. Dresses, shawls, and scarves were displayed, along with a United States flag and a banner featuring the sego lily. Elise T. Forsgren of Brigham City spent four months demonstrating the art of silk-making at the fair. Further national attention was drawn to Utah's silk enterprise when Emmeline B. Wells, editor of the *Woman's Exponent*, read a paper on it at the National Council of Women in 1895. (Excerpts from Janet Peterson, "Preaching Up Silk," *Pioneer* [Autumn 2002], 19–22.)



Image courtesy Utah State Historical Society



"I never took more satisfaction and I might say pleasure in any labour I ever performed in my life, such a unimty [unanimity] of feeling prevailed. I only had to go into a store and make my wants known, if it was cloth it was measured off without charge. My councilors and I wallowed through the snow until our clothes were wet a foot high to get things together give our noticeses &c.

We peaced [*sic*] blocks carded bats quilted and got together I think 27 Quilts, besides a great amount of other clothing, in one winter for the needy."<sup>29</sup>

In 1857–58, when United States troops approached Salt Lake City in connection with the so-called Utah War, the Provo Relief Society contributed bedding and warm clothing for the Utah men standing guard in the mountains. They later made a flag for the Provo Brass Band and rag carpets for a new meetinghouse. The Salt Lake Fourteenth Ward Relief Society made similar contributions. From September 1856 to March 1858 they provided food, clothing, and cash. . . .<sup>30</sup>

Besides helping the poor, one outlying Relief Society broadened its focus to fill other needs. Local priesthood leaders Isaac C. Haight and John M. Higbee blessed the presidency of Cedar City's Relief Society "with power to wash and anoint the sick, and of laying on of hands."<sup>31</sup> And Bishop Phillip K. Smith told Cedar City women their organization was "not so much for the supplying of the poor, as for the advancement of the Sisters in the Kingdom of God."<sup>32</sup> With a charter membership of 95 in November 1856, the society quickly became a significant factor in the spiritual life of the community.

The Indian Relief Societies were among the first of a variety of organizations which blossomed forth in Salt Lake Valley in the mid-1850s. Within several months, the Polysophical Society, the Universal Scientific Society, the Deseret Philharmonic Society, the Horticultural Society, the Deseret Theological Institute, and the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society all held forth. A spirit of optimism, a broadening of interests, the pursuit of knowledge and excellence in varied fields



*Lucy Meserve Smith*

seemed the order of the day. But during the Mormon Reformation of 1856–57, pluralism was discouraged, and many such organizations declined. Doubtless, crop failures and the progress of colonization dampened the enthusiasm of some groups. The Relief Societies and the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, organizations of obvious utility, survived.

Latter-day Saint wards in Northern Utah suffered a major organizational setback from the mass evacuation of Saints in the spring of 1858. This move south had been proposed as a means of avoiding encounters with the Utah Expedition, which moved into the Salt Lake Valley in June and eventually established Camp Floyd in Cedar Valley, 40 miles to the southwest. When people returned to their homes beginning in July, organizations did not quickly return to their previous state. Relief Societies, having just reached a high point in dedication and effectiveness, thus ceased to exist as a general rule. . . . The fact that Relief Societies were not then formally reestablished as a vehicle for poor relief and for women's social and spiritual enrichment may have been due, at least in part, to the multiplicity of voluntary cultural, theological, and intellectual organizations prior to the move south. . . .

During the decade 1858–67 there were still poor to be cared for, including thousands of immigrants from Europe. Other needs continued to exist which Relief Societies had helped meet, but very few societies were reorganized. Cedar City's Relief Society functioned until April 1859, then lapsed for nine years. The Manti Relief Society continued at least through 1859, perhaps beyond then. The Spanish Fork Relief Society contributed an ox to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund in the winter of 1860–61 and may have been the only society to have had continuous existence throughout

**N**ext came a transition. . . . In January 1855 Brigham Young notified bishops that he wanted the women to concentrate on aiding the Latter-day Saint poor. . . . The need for Relief Society aid to the poor was soon far greater than anyone could have anticipated.



the 1860s. By 1864 Willard's society and perhaps those in a few other locations had regrouped after a period of inactivity.<sup>33</sup> . . .

Not until after the Civil War, news of the coming of the transcontinental railroad, the discovery of precious metals in the hills of Utah, and the first signs of a major influx of non-Mormons into Utah did any thoroughgoing organizational efforts take place. And until Brigham Young took the initiative, the women were not formally organized into a Church-wide structure.

Uncertainty surrounds the role of Eliza R. Snow, who would later help organize Relief Societies throughout the Church. . . .<sup>34</sup>

In 1867, when President Young asked Sister Snow to supervise the organization of Relief Societies in all wards and settlements, he clearly intended to revive the organization on a broader basis than the societies of the 1850s. Sister Snow's vision of Relief Society included spiritual dimensions in addition to compassionate service. With her organizational ability, her broader vision of the potential of women's organizations, and her ability to proceed aggressively while retaining priesthood sanction, Eliza Snow helped establish societies that caught the enthusiasm and filled the needs of their members.

Despite the lack of continuity, the Indian Relief Societies and the Relief Societies which immediately succeeded them in 1855–58 did leave a legacy for Mormonism. . . . The Relief Societies of the 1850s, like other facets of Latter-day Saint life in that period, passed rather quickly into obscurity. Yet the vitality of Mormon group activity before the move south—particularly

among women—was a significant feature of the pioneering experience. ▼

1 Jill C. Mulvay, "The Liberal Shall Be Blessed: Sarah M. Kimball," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 44 (1976): 210–11. *History of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: General Board of Relief Society, 1966), 18–25.

2 "Pioneer Diary of Eliza R. Snow," 26 April 1847, in *Eliza R. Snow, An Immortal* (Salt Lake City: Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr., Foundation, 1957), 322. See also entries for 14 Mar. 1847 through 6 April 1848, 320–64. Patty Bartlett Sessions (Parry), *Diary*, 4 Feb. 1847–26 April 1848, Salt Lake City, Church History Library (CHL).

3 Phinehas Richards, *Journal*, 6 May–20 Dec. 1851, microfilm copy of holograph, CHL; Patty Sessions, *Diary*, 22 Mar. 1851–16 Jan. 1855; Female Council of Health in the Tabernacle, *Minutes*, 14 Aug. 1852, Miscellaneous Minutes Collection, CHL; Christine Croft Waters, "Pioneering Physicians in Utah, 1847–1900" (M.A. thesis, U of U, 1976), 14–17, discusses the Council of Health and mentions the Female Council.

4 See, for example, Book of Mormon: 1 Ne. 15:13–18; 22:3–8; 2 Ne. 30:3–6; 3 Ne. 21; Morm. 5:12–21; and D&C 3:16–30; 28:8, 32; 50:24.

5 Minutes of Meeting in President's Office, 4 Oct. 1853, Brigham Young Papers, CHL.

6 Synopsis of Brigham Young's address, 9 Oct. 1853, Salt Lake City.

7 "Record of the Female Relief Society Organized on the 9th of Feb. in the City of Great Salt Lake 1854," Louisa R. Taylor Papers, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, hereafter Taylor Minutes. An almost identical record is found in the papers of Amanda Barnes Smith, CHL, hereafter Smith Minutes.

*Lehi North Branch Relief Society on Utah Statehood Day, 1896. Included in photo are President Ellen Jones and branch president Thomas R. Jones.*







**I**n 1867, when President Young asked Sister Snow to supervise the organization of Relief Societies in all wards and settlements, he clearly intended to revive the organization on a broader basis than the societies of the 1850s.

8 Except for Amanda Smith, none of the founders of the first Indian Relief Society appears to have been particularly prominent in the LDS community.

9 Brigham Young to Thomas L. Kane, 29 June 1854, Brigham Young Letterbook 1, pp. 570–72, CHL, 11 May 1854, BY Papers.

10 J. H. Martineau to G. A. Smith, Parowan, 30 May 1855, *Deseret News*, 11 July 1855.

11 Report of Brigham Young Speech, 19 May 1854, Juanita Brooks, ed, *Journal of the Southern Indian Mission: Diary of Thomas D. Brown* (Logan: Utah State Univ. Press, 1972), 29–31.

12 Letter of mission scribe, Thomas D. Brown, *Deseret News*, 22 June 1854.

13 Minutes of Parowan Meeting, 21 May 1854, Thomas Bullock Minutes Collection, CHL.

14 Minutes of Meeting, Salt Lake City, 4 June 1854, Bullock Minutes. The minutes are partially in Pittman shorthand.

15 Taylor Minutes, 7 June 1854; Salt Lake Thirteenth Ward Indian RS Minutes, 1854–57, CHL.

16 Thirteenth Ward Indian RS Minutes, [7 June 1854]; Brigham Young Financial Records: Ledgers, 1853–55, pp. 397–402, and 1854–59, pp. 289–96; Journal, 1853–54, BY Papers; Sessions, Diary, 10 June 1854; all in CHL.

17 BY Ledger, 1853–55, pp. 397–402, and 1854–59, pp. 289–96. Wilford Woodruff, Diary, 16 June 1854, CHL. Thirteenth Ward Indian RS Minutes.

18 Thirteenth Ward Indian RS Minutes, 14 June 1854, [7] and 21 June 1854 and donation lists.

19 Smith Minutes, summary following minutes for 16 Aug. 1854. Brigham Young Financial Journal, 1853–54, pp. 264–65, 267–69, 275–76, 279–80, 285–86, 296–97, 309, 311, 313–15, 318, 332, 341–42, 344, 355–56, 358, 366, 373, 396–402; and 1854–59, pp. 289–96; Isaac C. Haight and Rufus C. Allen accounts with Brigham Young, 17 Aug.–10 Oct. 1854, BY Miscellaneous Letterbook, CHL.

20 On ward populations, see Bishops' Reports for April and October Conference, 1854, BY Papers.

21 Brigham Young to Isaac C. Haight and Brethren and the Southern Settlements in Iron County, 18 Aug. 1854, BY Letterbook 1, p. 631. Brigham Young to Rufus C. Allen, 13 Sept. and [9 Oct.?] 1854, BY Letterbook 1, pp. 674–75, 705. BY Financial Journal, 1853–54, pp. 286, 344. Indian Relief Societies received credit for \$474 in Indian goods and \$44 in cash after the last-known shipment of goods was made to Southern Utah, 10 Oct. 1854; BY Ledger, 1854–55, pp. 396, 402; BY Ledger, 1854–59, pp. 289–96.

22 Jacob Hamblin, Diary, 1854–57, 21 May 1855, and notations in back of volume, CHL. Brown to Young, 14 April 1855 and 1 April 1856, BY Papers.

23 Brown to Young, 30 May 1856, BY Papers. Juanita Brooks, "Indian Relations on the Mormon Frontier," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 12 (1944): 4–15.

24 Indian Agent George W. Armstrong to Brigham Young, 30 June 1857, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C.: Gideon and Co., 1857), 308–9.

25 Copies of requisitions for carpeting from each of Salt Lake City's 19 wards, 9–10 Dec. 1854, BY Letterbook 1, pp. 779–88. Patty Sessions, Diary, 2 Nov.–16 Dec. 1854.

26 In 1857 Wilford Woodruff reminded the bishops of Salt Lake Valley: "President Young had expressed a desire that in every ward there shall be a Female Relief Society established, which would be of great service to the Bishops, by relieving the poor." Minutes of Presiding Bishop's Meetings with Bishops, 17 Feb. 1857, CHL.

27 Lucy Meserve Smith, "Historical Narrative," in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey W. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 268.

28 Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1958), 148–56.

29 Lucy Meserve Smith, "Historical Narrative," 269–70.

30 Emmeline B. Wells, "History of the Relief Society," *Woman's Exponent* 32 (July 1903): 7.

31 Cedar City RS Minutes, 2 Nov. 1856. See also Linda King Newell, "A Gift Given: A Gift Taken: Washing, Anointing, and Blessing the Sick among Mormon Women," *Sunstone* 6 (Sept.–Oct. 1981): 16–25.

32 Cedar City RS Minutes, 3 Dec. 1856. Bishop Smith's name is sometimes given as Klingonsmith.

33 Cedar City Relief Society Minutes, 1856–75; Brigham Young to Rhoda Snell and Adelia S. Richards, [Spanish Fork], 9 Feb. 1861; BY Letterbooks; Spanish Fork RS Account Book, 1857–89; Brigham City First Ward RS History, 1868–1915; Manti Ward Historical Record, 1850–59.

34 *Eliza R. Snow: An Immortal*, 38–49; [Eliza R. Snow], Brief Sketch of the Organizations Conducted by the Latter-day Saint Women of Utah, Salt Lake City, 1880, holograph, Bancroft Library, Univ. of California, Berkeley: microfilm, CHL.



# DESERET EVENING NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH TERRITORY.

April 18, 1868

## FEMALE RELIEF SOCIETY

By Eliza R. Snow

As its name indicates, the first grand object of Society is to seek out and relieve the wants of the poor. President Smith, in giving instruction to the Society in Nauvoo, said that each sister could much better look into, and understand the circumstances of destitute families, than the brethren; and as they were more sympathetic in their natures, they could better enter into the feelings of the afflicted, and administer aid and consolations.

Relieving the poor, in most of instances, requires something beyond administering to present necessities. . . . The sick must be provide[d] for; but to those who have strength to labor, it is far more charitable to give employment and so direct their energies that they can learn what they need, and thus realize the fruits of their own labors. President Joseph Smith proposed deeding a city lot to the Society in Nauvoo, on which we purposed building comfortable houses for homes for the homeless, sick and destitute, and furnish such varieties of remunerative labor as would be adapted to the strength and capacities of such as were able to work. But the sudden death of the Prophet, and subsequent expulsion from Nauvoo, blasted all these fond anticipations, and instead of the generous pleasure of providing and superintending homes for other[s], we were ourselves homeless until

we found an abiding place in the lone wilderness. Although the existence of the Society was short, it accomplished much. During one extremely severe winter, in particular, it was instrumental, through the blessing of God, in preserving the lives of many who, otherwise, must have perished.

The climate of Nauvoo was a very sickly one, it was a climate in which none but a people of faith and righteousness could prosper. The location was beautiful and very desirable, but in consequence of its unhealthfulness it had been abandoned, by those who had from time to time tried the experiment, as a place that could not be built up. We had been expelled from Missouri, and in our transit subjected to great hardships and exposures, and our systems were more predisposed to sickness than they would have been under more favorable circumstance, many were unable to obtain those comforts that nature required.

Previous to the organization of the Relief Society, President Smith said that the sister[s], by relieving the Bishops and Elders of the care of the poor, would perform a very important work, and be instrumental in doing much good by liberating their hands so that they might devote their time and energies to other labors; he said that such an organization belonged to, and should exist in the church—that he had long had it on his mind,

but had been too much crowded with other duties to attend to it.

The care of the poor was a prominent item in the teachings of the Savior, and it always stands prominently forth among the requirements of our holy religion; and the business of caring for, and attending to the wants of the poor, was a heavy tax on the time as well as the means of the authorities of the Church, in addition to all the cares and labors incident on commencing settlements in new locations.

In administering to the poor, the Female Relief Society has other duties to perform than merely relieving bodily wants. Poverty of mind and sickness of hearts, also demand attention, and many times a kind expression—a few words of counsel, or even a warm and affectionate shake of the hand will do more good and be better appreciated than a purse of gold. . . .

When the Saints gather from abroad, strangers to everybody, and subject to be led astray by those who lie in wait to deceive, the F. R. Society should be prompt in looking after the stranger sisters, and introduce them into the society that will refine and elevate, and above all strengthen them in the faith of the Gospel, and in so doing, may be instrumental in saving many.

It would require volumes in which to define the duties, privileges and responsibilities that come within the preview of the Society. President Young



has turned the key to a wide and extensive sphere of action and usefulness. . . . Do not refuse anything that may be donated, from a shoestring, or patch, or a carpet rag, to an elegant house and lot with all the appurtenances thereof. Go at it (under the direction of your bishop) coolly, deliberately, energetically, unitedly and prayerfully, and God will crown your efforts with success.

*April 22, 1868*

This is the name of a Society which was organized in Nauvoo, on the 17th of March, 1842, by President Joseph Smith, assisted by Elders Willard Richards and John Taylor. Although the name may be of modern date, the institution is of ancient origin. We were told by our martyred prophet that the same organization existed in the church anciently, allusions to which are made in some of the epistle recorded in the New Testament, making use of the title, "elect lady."

This is an organization that cannot exist without the Priesthood, from the fact that it derives all its authority and influence from that source. When the Priesthood was taken from the earth, this institution as well as every other appendage to the true order of the church of Jesus Christ on the earth, became extinct, and had never been restored until the time referred to above.

Last winter President Young instructed the Bishops to organize Female Relief Societies in their various Wards, and at our last Conference repeated the

requisition, extending it to all the settlements, calling upon the sisters to enter into organizations, not only for the relief of the poor, but for the accomplishment of every good and noble work. He urged upon them the manufacture of articles made of straw—the cultivation of silk, and the establishing of fashions that would be becoming—such as would be worthy the patronage of sensible, refined and intelligent women who stand, as we in reality do, at the head of the world.

Having been present at the organization of the "Female Relief Society of Nauvoo," and having now in my possession the minutes of the organization and the records of that Society, which is a sample for all other, and also having had considerable experience in that association, perhaps I may communicate a few hints that will assist the daughters of Zion in stepping forth in this very important position, which is replete with new and multiplied responsibilities. If any of the daughters and mothers in Israel are feeling in the least circumscribed in their present spheres, they will now find ample scope for every power and capability for doing good with which they are most liberally endowed.

"The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo" was organized after the pattern of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with a Presidentess, who chose two Counselors. These were ordained and set apart by the Priesthood, and were to fill those offices so long as they

faithfully discharged the trust committed to them. This quorum was fully authorized to appoint such officers, committees and assistants as were requisite from time to time, either to fill permanent office or to perform any temporary agency that circumstance might demand. . . .

President Joseph Smith told the sisters that he not only wanted them to learn to do business, but he wanted them to learn to do it correctly and in a business-like manner. He set the example, and kindly proffered his instructions, not only through he Presidentess, but often met with the Society and gave much wise counsel and precious instruction and encouragement—copies of which are carefully preserved. . . .

Through the authority which President Young has conferred upon the Bishops, they now stand in the same relation with the Societies which have been, and are now about to be organized in the wards and settlements, as President Joseph Smith did with the one in Nauvoo. No Society can overstep the counsel of its Bishop—his word is law, to which, all its doings are amenable.

Should the question arise in the mind, of any, What is the object of the Female Relief Society? I would reply—to do good—to bring into requisition every capacity we possess for doing good, not only in relieving the poor, but in saving souls. United effort will accomplish incalculably more than can be accomplished by the most effective individual energies. ▣



# Sarah Granger Kimball

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I am the daughter of Oliver Granger, and Lydia Dibble Granger, was born Dec. 29, 1818, in the town of Phelps, Ontario Co., New York. . . . My father, Oliver Granger, had an interesting experience in connection with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He . . . had a "heavenly vision." My father was told by a personage who said his name was Moroni that the Book of Mormon, about which his mind was exercised, was a true record of great worth, and Moroni instructed him (my father) to testify of its truth and that he should hereafter be ordained to preach the everlasting Gospel to the children of men. . . .

I was married in Kirtland, Geauga Co., Ohio; by Warren Cowdery Esq., Sept. 22nd, 1840; to Hiram Kimball, eldest son of Phineas and Abigail Kimball, of West Fairley, Orange Co., Vermont. . . . I returned with my husband to his home in Nauvoo, Ill., three weeks after my marriage. We boarded six months in the family of Dr. Frederic Williams, then went to housekeeping. My eldest son was born in Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Ill., Nov. 22nd, 1841.

The walls of the Nauvoo Temple were about three feet above the foundation. The Church was in need of help to assist in raising the Temple walls. I belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; my husband did not belong to the Church at that time. I wished to help on the Temple, but did not like to ask my husband (who owned considerable property) to help for my sake.

My husband came to my bedside, and as he was admiring our three days old darling I said,



"What is the boy worth?" He replied, "O, I don't know, he is worth a great deal." I said, "Is he worth a thousand dollars?" The reply was "Yes, more than that if he lives and does well." I said, "Half of him is mine, is it not?" "Yes, I suppose so." "Then I have something to help on the Temple." (pleasantly) "You have?" "Yes, and I think of turning my share right in as tithing." "Well. I'll think about that."

Soon after the above conversation Mr. Kimball met the Prophet Joseph Smith, President of the Church, and said, "Sarah has got a little the advantage of me this time, she proposes to turn out the boy as church property." President Smith seemed pleased with the joke, and said, "I accept all such donations, and from this day the boy shall stand recorded, church property." Then turning to Willard Richards, his secretary, he said, "Make a record of this; and you are my witness." Joseph Smith then said, "Major, (Mr. Kimball was major in the Nauvoo Legion) you now have the privilege of paying \$500 and retaining possession, or receiving \$500 and giving possession," Mr. Kimball asked if city property was good currency. President Smith replied that it was. Then said Mr. Kimball, "How will that reserve block north of the Temple suit?" President Smith replied, "It is just what we want." The deed was soon made out and transferred in due form.

President Smith said to me, "You have consecrated your first born son, for this you are blessed of the Lord. I bless you In the name of the Lord God of Abraham of Isaac and of Jacob. And I seal upon you all the blessings that pertain to the



faithful, Your name shall be handed down in honorable remembrance from generation to generation.

"Your son shall live and be a blessing to you in time and an honor and glory to you throughout the endless eternities (changes) to come. He shall be girded about with righteousness and bear the helmet and the breastplate of war. You shall be a blessing to your companion and the honored mother of a noble posterity. You shall stand as a savior to your father's house, and receive an everlasting salvation, which I seal upon you by the gift of revelation and by virtue and authority of the Holy Priesthood vested in me, in the name of Jesus Christ." . . .

In the summer of 1843, a maiden lady (Miss Cooke) was seamstress for me and the subject of combining our efforts for assisting the Temple hands came up in conversation. She desired to be helpful, but had no means to furnish. I told her I would furnish material if she would make some shirts for the workmen. It was then suggested that some of our neighbors might wish to combine means and efforts with ours, and we decided to invite a few to come and consult with us on the subject of forming a Ladies' Society. The neighboring sisters met in my parlor and decided to organize. I was delegated to call on Sister Eliza R. Snow and ask her to write for us a Constitution and By-laws, and submit them to President Joseph Smith prior to our next Thursday's meeting. She cheerfully responded and when she read them to him he replied that the Constitution and By-laws were the best he had ever seen. "But," he said, "this is not what you want. Tell the sisters their offering is accepted of the Lord, and he has something better for them than a written Constitution. I invite them all to meet with me and a few of the brethren in the Masonic Hall over my store next Thursday afternoon, and I will organize the women under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood." He further said, "The Church was never perfectly organized until the women were thus organized." He wished to have Sister Emma Smith elected to preside in fulfillment of the revelation which called her an Elect Lady.

In the wanderings and persecutions of the Church I have participated, and in the blessings,

endowments, and holy anointings and precious promises that I have received. To sorrow I have not been a stranger. . . My husband was detained in New York City, and, had become financially much embarrassed. The next year he came to me financially ruined and broken in health.

I engaged in school teaching in the 14th Ward to sustain and educate my family. My salary was only \$25.00 per month, but that was much to us at that time.

April 1st, 1854, my youngest son was born. I discontinued school three months, then opened school in my home. I taught eight years.

I should have remarked that on arriving here I sold our fit out (team, etc.) for a comfortable little home; this I have always considered providential. The Indian agent gave me a nine year old wild Indian girl, whom I educated and raised. She died at nineteen. I named her Kate. . . .

My husband was drowned Mar. 1st, 1863, in the Pacific Ocean by the wreck of the steamer *Ida Hancock*, off the coast of San Pedro, on his way to the Sandwich Islands; aged 62.

I was elected President of the 17th Ward Relief Society, Feb. 7th, 1857.

In December, 1865, a little girl was brought to me whom I adopted.

Nov. 13, 1868, a silver trowel and mallet were furnished me and, assisted by a master mason and surrounded by an assemblage of people, I had the honor of laying the corner stone of the first Relief Society building erected in this dispensation.

*— Sarah M. Kimball*

**The first Relief Society hall** was built in the Fifteenth Ward in Salt Lake City in 1868–69. (On p. 26, see location of Society Hall located at 1st South between 3rd and 4th West, on Block 79 of the Church History Museum Salt Lake City Model.)

The building was a two-story frame building, about 20 X 30 feet and cost \$2,631. The ward store occupied the first story July 22, 1869, bringing into the Society a perpetual revenue; while the ward Relief Society Hall was on the second story.





This and subsequent halls were often planned and styled after Joseph Smith's two-story store in Nauvoo in which the Relief Society was first organized in 1842. As of 1975, remaining church buildings from the period 1869–1889 include

- Mapleton Relief Society hall and granary (1888)
- Mayfield (Cobble) Relief Society hall and meeting-house (1887)
- Salem Relief Society hall (ca. 1880)
- Santa Clara Relief Society hall (1877)
- Toquerville Relief Society hall (1880)
- Washington Relief Society hall (1871-75)

See Allen D. Roberts, *Utah Historical Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (Summer 1975): 311–12, 320. Sarah M. Kimball and Society Hall photos courtesy Utah State Historical Society. 📷

## BLOCK 79

Society Hall

Sarah M. Kimball

100 SOUTH

300 WEST







## Salt Lake 14th Ward 1857

# Album Quilt

BY LINDA HUNTER ADAMS

BYU professor emeritus

**T**he Salt Lake 14th Ward album quilt of 1857 fit right into a well-established tradition of album quilts. “Album quilts were extremely popular, a fad, mid-19th century. They were distinguished primarily by their composite style. Rather than one over-all design, as a single quilter constructing a whole quilt would select, album quilts showcased the many styles and talents of the multiple women who sewed the individual blocks. Not only was each block unique, each was signed by the maker so that the assembled quilt could be ‘read’ like the pages of a family album.”<sup>1</sup>

The 14th Ward album quilt, like many of the quilts of that period, features motifs of flowers, fruit, birds, and butterflies. These were appliquéd out of scraps of fabric or embroidered, or both. Several blocks were worked from wool yarn in a crewel style. The quilt blocks show the fine sewing skills of these Relief Society sisters. Many of these women brought with them to Utah the traditions of European handwork.

“Because printed fabrics were expensive and rare, women typically cut out a scene, flower, or motif from the fabric and appliquéd it on a plain background. In this way, the precious yard goods were ‘stretched’ to adorn many bed coverings and quilts” (32). Some of the quilt blocks display a favorite saying or scripture, along with the creator’s signature. “Some [signatures] were embroidered. Some were expertly penned in indelible ink, an

invention of about 30 years earlier” (32). Some signatures are part of the quilt block’s design. “Unlike those of most quilts that are made today, each individual block ‘sandwich’ was finished top to bottom: appliquéd top, cotton batting, and backing were all quilted together before being joined to the other blocks. . . . Only after each block was individually quilted were they stitched together with blue sashing. . . . That sewing must have been the agenda of the Relief Society for many meetings” (38).

The 14th Ward Relief Society was established to help the “Lamanites” or Indians before Brigham Young officially reestablished the Relief Society churchwide in 1867. Relief Society president was Phoebe Woodruff, wife of Wilford Woodruff, and meetings were often held in the Woodruff home.

The album quilt was made to be raffled as a fund-raiser to help the poor. The quilt was possibly made to be raffled at a party celebrating the 10th anniversary of the pioneers’ entrance into the Valley. Some quilt blocks carry an August 1857 date. Exactly when and where the quilt was raffled in unknown. But the recipient of the raffled quilt was 12-year-old Richard Stephen Horne. In later life Horne cut the quilt into two pieces and gave half to his daughter Lizzie (Mary Elizabeth Horne Durrant) and half to his daughter Belle (Isabel Horne Harston). These two halves were not united for 130 years, until descendants of these two pioneer families found one another and made the quilt whole again. ▣

1 All quotations and photos from Carol Holindrake Nielson, *The Salt Lake City 14th Ward Album Quilt, 1857* (Salt Lake City: U of U Press, 2004), 31.



# FIRST FOUR *General Relief Society* PRESIDENTS IN UTAH

**2 Eliza Roxey Snow:**  
**1866–1887** was born on Jan. 21, 1804, in Becket, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and baptized into the Church on April 5, 1833.

In Kirtland she taught the family school of the Prophet Joseph Smith and boarded with them. She was married to Joseph Smith before he died. Late in April 1838, the Snow family started with a small company for Far West, Missouri. Eventually they settled with the Saints in Nauvoo, where Eliza taught school, wrote for the press, and began to rise in prominence in the Church. She was present when the Prophet organized the Relief Society, of which she was named secretary and safely brought the “Book of Records” to Great Salt Lake in 1847.

Her long record as a temple worker began at Nauvoo. She arrived in Salt Lake Valley in the month of October 1847. When the Endowment House was dedicated as a temporary temple for the Saints, May 1855, she was placed in charge of the sisters’ work and held the sacred office as long as ordinance work was performed there.

In 1867 she was called by President Young, to whom she was married, to assist the bishops in organizing ward Relief Societies throughout the Church, which were established in 1868. In that position she labored continuously for 21 years. On June 19, 1880, she was formally set apart by President John Taylor to preside over The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints women’s organizations in all the world.

Eliza R. Snow died on Dec. 5, 1887, in Salt Lake City, Utah. She was given a public funeral at the Assembly Hall and buried in President Young’s private burial lot on First Avenue.



**3 Zina D. H. Young:**  
**1888–1901** third General President of Relief Society, was baptized into the Church in Kirtland by Hyrum Smith in 1835 when she was 14. She received two spiritual gifts, which remained

hers throughout life—the speaking in tongues and the interpretation of tongues. Zina exhibited in her character the influence which sorrow and tribulation exert on a character when they act as a refining element to bring out all its native love and sympathy. Her mother and father both died as the result of persecutions against the Mormons, and she herself passed through all the trials and troubles the Saints experienced before the exodus. Zina had two sons by an early marriage. She later married Brigham Young and had an only daughter, but she reared four of his other children.

Much of her life was devoted to teaching the young, after which she served as Eliza R. Snow’s first counselor. In 1870, President Brigham Young gave Zina the mission of establishing silk culture in the Territory, and silently seeking to overcome her great repugnance to silkworms, she succeeded in fulfilling this mission. She was a worker in the Endowment House and later served in the Salt Lake Temple until the time of her death.

For many years she practiced obstetrics and was always ready to lend her outstanding abilities as a nurse.

At the death of Eliza R. Snow, Zina Young became the General President of Relief Society, April 1, 1888, a position she held for 13 years. During her presidency, the Relief Society became incorporated and affiliated with the National Council of Women. Upon many occasions she ably represented the Society at national conventions.





She died Aug. 28, 1901, at the age of 80, "Aunt Zina," loving and beloved by all.

## 4 **Bathsheba Wilson Smith: 1901–1910,**

fourth General President of Relief Society, was born near Shinston, Harrison County, West Virginia, May 3, 1822, to Mark and Susannah Ogden Bigler. George A. Smith, a cousin of the Prophet Joseph Smith, was one of the elders who brought the gospel to her father's spacious home in West Virginia. There she became engaged to Elder Smith, but it wasn't until after the family had been driven from Missouri and was settled in Nauvoo that their marriage took place. They were married July 25, 1841. Bathsheba was the youngest woman present at the organization of the Relief Society, in 1842, being only 19, and she lived to see it grow from a membership of 18 to over 40,000. On Jan. 31, 1844, she and her husband received their endowments and were united for time and eternity. Joseph Smith presided at the ceremony. On Feb. 9, 1846, the Smiths left Nauvoo with George A. Smith in charge of the company. They arrived in Salt Lake valley in October 1849.

Sister Smith officiated in the opening of the Nauvoo, Logan, and Salt Lake temples and for 17 years continuously worked with Sister Eliza R. Snow in the Endowment House. After the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated, Sisters Zina D. H. Young, Bathsheba W. Smith, and Minnie J. Snow were set apart to preside over the woman's department. In December 1877, when the Relief Society of Salt Lake Stake was organized, she was elected treasurer. In October 1888, she was chosen second counselor to Zina D. H. Young in the General Relief Society, and on Nov. 10, 1901, became president of the General Relief Society of the Church, with Annie Taylor Hyde and Ida Smoot Dusenberry, counselors.

After the death of George A. Smith, she was highly honored by the priesthood to fill the position of Elect Lady in the Temple and in the Relief Society. She was the first General President to occupy the quarters of the Society in the Bishop's Building. Her death occurred in Salt Lake City on Sept. 2, 1910, when she was 88 years of age.



5 **Emmeline B. Wells: 1910–1921,** fifth General President of Relief Society, showed dauntless courage and a determination to rise above adversity during her early life. In 1844, when she was but 16 years of age, her husband's family apostatized and moved from Nauvoo, leaving the young wife alone, far from her Massachusetts home. Her husband had gone to sea to earn extra money for his new wife. Emmeline's infant son died in the fall of that year. Amidst these trials she found refuge in the home of Bishop Newel K. Whitney, whom she married the following year, thinking her husband had deserted her. With Whitney's family she journeyed to the Salt Lake Valley, arriving there in 1848. When her second daughter was only five weeks old, Bishop Whitney died.

Emmeline had taught school in Massachusetts, Nauvoo, and Winter Quarters. Within two years she married Daniel H. Wells and had three more daughters. As her children grew older, she devoted her outstanding abilities to public service. In 1877, she became editor and publisher of the *Woman's Exponent*. The previous year she had accepted the mission given by President Brigham Young of directing the gathering and storing of wheat, which she faithfully performed until the wheat was turned over to the government in 1918.

Emmeline B. Wells represented the women of Utah many times both as a citizen of Utah and as the General President of Relief Society, sustained October 1910. She was involved in the Woman's Suffrage Movement and in Washington D.C. represented Mormon women.



Throughout her life, she took delight and comfort in her excellent literary work, both poetry and prose, which remains to us today as a memorial to her industry and artistry. She died April 25, 1921. ▣



# Organization of the Provo Relief Society: May 14th, 1868

*Excerpts from the minutes of the Female Relief Societies of Provo. Spelling and punctuation modernized.*

**FIRST MEETING:** *Meeting House, May 14, 1868. Pres. Bishop A. O. Smoot presiding; Bishop JPR Johnson, Counselors T. Allman and M. Jones. Meeting opened by singing; prayer by Counselor Allman; singing by the choir.*

**Bishop Smoot said,** "I have great pleasure in meeting with the Sisters of the first Ward. We have met to organize a Female Relief Society according to the pattern given by the Prophet Joseph Smith. "I have a copy of the first lecture given by him to the Relief Society in Nauvoo. President Young wished the same revived. It is organized and working well in Salt Lake City. I understand you have been active in providing for the poor already during the past cold winter with bedding and other comforts which gives pleasure to me. You will be organized on the same principle as the first Presidency of the Church with the president and two counselors, secretary, and treasurer and appoint teachers over each district to visit each family and know their condition which they can do

better than the Elders can. The Bishops will meet with you from time to time and counsel with you in regard to your duties. We realize there is a vast amount of talent in our sisters, which will be developed through this organization. It will be the means of increasing their ability and give them lessons in human nature and better prepare them to be helpmates in the priesthood."

**SECOND MEETING:**  
*May 17, 1868*

**Bishop Johnson said,** "We are here as visitors and we wish you to proceed with this meeting upon your own responsibility although there are but few here. A feeling of timidity comes over me as I arise to address you. You must try and overcome this as much as you can. Still this spirit of fear is a benefit to those who are exercised by it as it is calculated to make us look to God and depend on him instead of ourselves.

**24TH MEETING:** *Minutes of a special meeting Female Relief Societies of Provo; Meetinghouse, September 9, 1869*

**E. R. Snow said,** "I am by no means a professional lecturer and had no desire to talk merely

for the sake of talking. If I can do good by speaking, I am thankful to God for it.

"It is a great pleasure to me to look upon the faces of my Sisters who are saints of God and seek to do his will. Let us ask the question who are these my Sisters? They are the daughters of the most high God and we are here in this dispensation to cooperate with God and our brethren in saving the human family. . . .

"Are the sisters merely human machines who have to be saved by our brethren in these last days? Woman has her part to perform which is no insignificant part. We are apt to think too little of the responsibilities that rest upon us. Woman is designed to be a help meet to man and the work of the last days cannot be accomplished without her assistance. The female Relief Society is no trifling thing. The organization places woman in a position to act in accordance with the law of the priesthood. It is a portion of the organization of the church when the church is fully organized. The Prophet Joseph Smith said this organization existed in ancient times and that the illusion to elect lady meant the same as president of the society.

"I once heard Brother Kimball say on the stand that they must be organized. . . .

"Many of the sisters treat the subject as if it were little or no account. Joseph Smith considered it of important not only in visiting the poor but he said it was to save souls

The Relief Society was organized in the ward May 14, 1868, with Caroline M. Johnson as president. She and all succeeding presidents have been well fitted for the time of their leadership and have, with the aid of their very fine visiting teachers, helped all who were in need.

On May 7, 1876, the Sunday School was organized with J. P. R. Johnson as superintendent.

—Mary Ettie Farrer Whitehead.

—Utah County Centennial History





*Eliza R. Snow*

and attached much consequence to its moral influence. President Young manifests the same interest in behalf of the cooperation of the Sisters and prays for them daily. . . .

"Let your books, especially that of the Secretary, be well kept that it may be an ornament to the society and be worthy of being handed down to generations a hundred years hence as an example. . . .

"There is great responsibility resting on the mother. The mother that is . . . energetic and lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God gives characters to her children, the future statesmen and mothers in Israel. The education of the child commences very early. It takes its first lessons from the mother. When it sees her smile then is the time she is laying the foundation for its future. . . . If she wants her child to be honest, she must be honest in every expression of her countenance. Honesty is the foundation of all that is great and good. Be truthful if you want your children to regard the truth. Stir up a conscience in the heart and cultivate that as they grow up. Train them in nobility, character. Be careful to use good language. Avoid all low speeches and vulgar phrases. It is as easy to teach

things good as evil. Mothers should be educated but if they have not had that privilege, they should realize the necessity of educating their children to prepare them for what is before them. . . . These are some of the subjects you are to teach in your meetings.

"Never give way to discouragement. Discouragement does not belong to a saint of God. Study to preserve union. Do not condescend to anything that is little. Overlook weakness and if you feel injured never retaliate. If you do, you place yourselves in the same footing with the author of the offense. Hold each other's feelings sacred. We have no time for trifling. . . .

"I am proud of [my Sisters] and wish to see each one honor her being. Be a blessing to each other and accomplish a great deal of good. The female Relief Society is designed to be a great blessing [to those] who are associated in it. "Joseph Smith said that if properly conducted, it would become the most glorious society on the earth. He said the time would come when queens of the earth would bring presents to the Society for the relief of the poor. . . . Let us honor our own beings, honor our husbands and cooperate with them in all good works that we may attain to all the blessings which are for the faithful Daughters of Zion.

#### **25TH MEETING: School house, October 7, 1869**

**Pres. Caroline M. Johnson said,** "I was very much pleased at our last meeting to hear the instructions from Eliza R. Snow. Sisters, she has plainly shown us are duties and

let us try and carry out the good instructions she has given us. . . .

#### **37TH MEETING: School house, June 2, 1870**

**Elder Thomas Allman said,** "I am pleased to meet with you. We meet to do good to relieve the poor and those who are in need . . . I understand you are getting means to purchase a carpet for the prayer circle room. I ask the Lord to bless you."

**Elder Moses Jones said,** "The sisters belonging to the female relief society will be blessed in all your labors in doing good. President Johnson and her counsel have responded to every call and you have been blessed with means and it shall multiply in your hands. We want to see you united in keeping the Word of Wisdom and every requirement which will be for your benefit."

**Bishop JPR Johnson said,** "Here is a good spirit. Let us carry out the instructions we have heard and obey the word of the Lord in keeping the Word of Wisdom. Then we can claim the blessings. It is the teacher's duty to look after the poor and see that they do not suffer. Do not speak evil of the Lord's anointed. If you have done it, do it no more. I asked the Lord to bless you, your husbands and your children. Amen"

**Pres. Caroline M. Johnson said,** "My sisters, let us try and carry out the counsels and the good instructions that have been given us. I desire to help build up the Kingdom of God and I feel to thank my Sisters for what they have paid towards getting the carpet." ▼



## New Membership

### October, 2010

Sidney J. Atkin  
Jeffrey H. Barnes  
Richard Brown Best  
John Lynn Edrington,  
*Life*

Daniel C. Green, *Life*  
Philip B. Johnson  
Dave A. Reed, *Life*

### November, 2010

John Derrill Bills  
David J. Evans  
George W. Harrington  
Jerald S. Hawley  
James Lawrence  
Pitchford

Lewis Victor Rasmussen  
Alvin C. Rencher  
Stephen Lloyd Richey  
J. Lyle Thompson  
Terry M. Tilley  
David J. Treseder  
David W. Ware  
Curtis Willie Wells

### January, 2011

Terry P. Clemmer, *Life*  
Gerald M. Cooper  
Roger G. Crittenden  
Kelly Dutton  
Dale J. Evans  
James Graff  
Brett Grow, *Life*  
John A. Hart  
James Smith Isom  
J. Paul Jones  
Robert Quist  
Devin Ruesch  
Val Henry Schultz  
Roy Shaw  
Thomas E. Seegmiller  
Richard Sears Tanner  
Forest Taylor  
Jack Taylor  
Floyd Wilkinson

### February, 2011

Don Beus  
Gerald Lee Little  
Paul Peterson  
Frank Robins  
LeRoy G. Rose  
Darrell Smith  
G. Stan Tanner  
Earl Brent Udy  
Douglas Gardner  
Vincent  
William R. Wright

### March, 2011

Steven C. Allred  
Paul Ervin Anderson  
Kenneth M. Bindrup  
Ken A. Bischoff  
Justin R. Eccles, *Life*

Stephen L. Huff, Jr.  
Oscar F. Jespersen  
Theo T. Maisey  
Ronald Ray  
Charles E. Robinson  
Michael Shaw

### April, 2011

Barry A. Baker  
Warren L. Barnes  
Mike Burdett  
Richard A. Green  
Horatio D. Gregory  
Mark Thomas Meeks  
Arlo Eugene Moulton  
Thomas J. Saldivar  
Lenard Stull

### May, 2011

Gerald T. Bettridge  
J Gordon Christensen  
Ronald Eliason  
Chad Evans  
Thomas Grover  
LeMar Hanson  
Gerald Homer  
Ellis R. Ivory  
William E. Moyes  
John Paige  
Drew O. Parkin  
Mitchell Pratt  
Bill Scott  
Larry Leroy Smith  
John Eng Storheim, DDS  
Calvin Welling, *Life*  
Gary B. White

### June, 2011

O. William Asplund  
J. Ralph Atkin  
Benjamin Bartek  
Brian Bartek  
David Bartek  
James Bartek  
Dr. John Bartek  
Steven E. Bartek  
Walter Bartek  
James Hyrum Crane  
James LaMar Craner  
Asael ElRey Dilworth  
David M. Fairbanks  
David W. Fairbanks  
Marvin Gardner  
Dan Gillespie  
Grant E. Hann  
Don Hawley  
Paul L. Huber  
Gordon O. Johnson  
Wayne Laccoarce  
Ronald M. Layton  
Franklyn Brent (Bud)  
Matheson

Clyde L. "Pete" Neilson  
Steve Harold Rich  
James Thomas Richins  
Peter Daniel Richins  
Thomas Kent Richins

Keith H. Westbroek

### July, 2011

John W. Hicks  
Melvin L. Holloway  
Dale Janes  
Nick L. Nielson  
Don J. Robinson  
Thayne C. Smedley  
Blaine Whipple

### August, 2011

Stephen Baer  
Ed Brown  
Wayne R. Dilworth  
Douglas C. Empey  
Richard W. Evans  
Alan R. Medaris  
Wayne L. Pack  
Gerald Parsons  
Richard L. Penrod  
Donald E. Stucker  
Regan S. Wilson

### September, 2011

John Marcus Beck  
Tim Burgon  
Brent Chamberlain  
Melvin A. Cook  
Ivan Draper  
Ivin M. Einzinger  
David H. Epperson  
Max Evans  
William J. Frost  
Gary W. Hannig  
Scott Hardman  
Cecil M. Jorgensen  
Randall A. Mackey  
Stephen D. Miller  
Frank W. Nichols  
Don R. Petersen  
Timothy Proctor

### October, 2011

Roger A. Christensen  
Darral K. Draper  
Gary W. Dingman  
D. Kirk Gundersen  
Kenyon P. Hart  
Michael B. Jedin  
Philip B. Johnson  
Gary McMurrin  
Jerry L. Parker  
Richard D. Poll  
Richard Richards  
Verl P. Roundy  
Richard J. Snow  
Lee Starkweather  
Rodney Torgersen

### November, 2011

Bryant Adams, *Life*  
Lynn W. Call  
George W. Cherrington  
Sterling D. Johnson  
Brent D. Madsen  
Doug Major  
Andrew Terry

### December, 2011

David E. Bott  
Roger O. Burke  
Keith Carrigan  
David M. Corn  
Stephen Crosland  
Dan L. Greenland

## Annual Members Converted to Life

### November, 2010

Albert Gerrit Bottema  
John W. Smith

### December, 2010

James D. Krog

### February, 2011

Blaine P. Anderson  
Mark Ethington  
James S. McKendrick  
Larry D. Rhodes

### March, 2011

G. Lael Carter

James R. McAllister  
Don Payne  
Kenneth R. Richey  
Ted Stagg  
Calvin R. Stephens  
Mark E. Walker  
Charles W. Watson

Robert Clair Pearson

### June, 2011

Richard Farrell  
Stevenson

### September, 2011

A. Owen Smoot

### November, 2011

Daniel M. Jones

### December, 2011

Verd J. Erickson  
Ronald J. Ford  
Dan L. Greenland, Jr.

## Deceased Members

### At Large

Joseph Norton  
Thomas A.  
Stephenson

### Box Elder

Robert D. Sanderson

### Brigham Young

J. Elliot Cameron  
Robert Crabtree  
Richard G. Ellsworth  
Lawrence L.  
Epperson  
Max C. Robinson

### Canyon Rim

Leon A. Halgren  
Vernard Johnson  
Keith Karren  
William J. Maynes  
Gerald W. Smith  
F. Stanley Ward

### Cedar City

James Sandberg

### Centerville

Kenneth Madsen

### Cotton Mission

Richard Pettit

### First Capitol

Keith L. Burris

### Hole in the Rock

Robert Munson

### Holladay

Reed L. Walker  
Dwaine A. Nielson

### Hurricane Valley

Glenn Stratton

### Jordan River Temple

John D. Adams

### Maple Mountain

F. Lewis Pratt

### Morgan

Earl J. Banner

### Murray

Cal Reynolds

### Ogden Pioneer

Alvin R. Carter  
Blair Dahl  
Wallace E. Haun  
Benjamin Plowgian  
Keith Wilcox

### Pioneer Heritage

Benjamin K. Wallace

### Roosevelt

Terril J. Halladay

### Settlement Canyon

Donald J. Rosenberg

### Taylorville/Bennion

Elwood Shaffer

### Temple Quarry

Charles L. Wright

### The Mountain Valley

Raymond Green  
William 'Bill'

Christiansen

Clyde Muir

Clifford Frisby

### Upper Snake River Valley

Alyn B. Andrus  
Thomas Kershaw  
Robert Orme



## 2011 SUP NATIONAL CONVENTION

**T**he Sons of the Utah Pioneers (SUP) annual convention, hosted by the Holladay Chapter, was held Aug. 25–27, in Salt Lake City. The program was full of excellent events shaped to inspire a look back at the wonderful examples that have preceded us in this great valley. The theme for the 2011 National Convention was Eyes Westward, which took on several meanings as the program unfolded.

The conventioners took several tours discovering the history of this great valley: Antelope Island, the Cathedral of the Madeline, Masonic Temple, the open-pit copper mine, and the Temple granite quarry site, just to name a few places. At the evening dinner event, the speakers were the organizers

of the Joseph Smith Jr. and Emma Hale Smith Historical Society, and the past President of the Brigham Young Family Association.

At the closing session, Dr. Reid L. Neilson, Managing Director of the Church History Department, encouraged us to reach out by building bridges to other religions that have pioneer ancestry in this valley. This land was built up to be a refuge “where none shall come to hurt or make afraid” (words from “Come, Come Ye Saints”).

Finally, the governor of Utah, Gary Herbert, spoke. He kept with the running theme that our pioneer ancestors wanted to make this “desert blossom like a rose,” and through hard work, putting their shoulders to the wheel, they did it.

We continue this tradition as the state of Utah has become a great place to live, topping the national averages in such areas as best quality of life, volunteerism, clean air, and education.

David B. Wirthlin of the Mills Chapter (*pictured above*), became president-elect by unanimous vote of the members gathered in the Marriott Hotel. David expressed his desire to build on the good work of the past, to strengthen the financial position of the National S.U.P. and he emphasized his desire to give more support to the chapters to increase membership and influence in their local areas. ▮



## 2012 SUP NATIONAL CONVENTION

**Provo, Utah - August 23–25**

**Sponsored by the Brigham Young and Maple Mountain Chapters**



**Nine Mile Canyon** - known today as one of the finest locations for petroglyphs and pictographs by the early Fremont culture. Left: Balanced Rock at mile-post marker 31.9



*Activities include:*

Women's Programs, Big Band Dance, Great Musical talent, Outstanding Speakers, Gourmet Meals, Provo Pioneer Village and more!

*Friday Activities and Tours will feature:*

**Nine Mile Canyon**

**West Desert Historic Sites**

*Speakers include:*

**Elder Marlin K. Jensen**, Seventy/Church Historian

**Dr. Ronald Walker**, Brigham Young Historian

**Terry Oaks**, Director of Church Welfare Services

**Brent Ashworth**, Historian and Artifact Collector

*The host hotel, The Provo Marriott, is providing special rates for convention visitors. More details and registration information forthcoming on [BYSUP.ORG](http://BYSUP.ORG) and [WWW.SONSOFTUTAHPIONEERS.ORG](http://WWW.SONSOFTUTAHPIONEERS.ORG)*







# Even a Christmas Tree

by Eva Willes Wangsgaard

*Here in this wintered garden crisply white  
I stand in pansy dark, aware of light.  
Cold shadows lie mauve-blue upon the snow  
And Christmas-tree bejeweled windows throw  
Their widening paths of gold. Far hills of blue  
Are shouldering out the larger world I knew,  
And, angel-like, the clouds can all but sing,  
For Christmas is so intimate a thing.  
At any moment now I'll hear the beat  
Of sandal scuffs, a donkey's twinkling feet  
Bringing a Virgin in a deep-blue gown  
Into my dreaming heart's Judean Town.  
How wonderful a Babe long-born can lie  
So warm and real upon my breast while I  
Am centuries away where drifts of white  
Have hid the garden where I stand tonight!  
And angel themes a moment can be heard  
Above the rocket's shrill and shivery word:  
Now I can go back to a tinsel star  
Knowing that God is with us where we are.  
A Child was born within a hay-sweet stall  
And even a Christmas Tree grows strangely tall.*

THE RELIEF SOCIETY MAGAZINE  
Volume 45, No. 12, December 1958